

Satyananda Yoga in Europe

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Inspiration – England, N. Ireland, Denmark,
France, Austria (1971–1979)

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In humility
we offer this dedication to
Swami Satyananda Saraswati,
who is
inspiring and guiding
Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati
to live as a sannyasin.



Preface

During the Years 1968 to 1983 Swami Satyananda Saraswati went on a number of world tours which introduced all practices of Tantric Yoga to a vast public in the West and which led to the establishment of permanent centers and ashrams teaching all forms of Bihar Yoga all over the world with its spiritual center at the Bihar School of Yoga in Munger, Bihar, India. These activities and accomplishments are already well, however, briefly documented.

These activities and accomplishments outside India are, summarily documented within the context of the documentation of the overall activities and accomplishments of Swami Satyananda Saraswati, most of which took place in India, in the book *Mandate and Accomplishments (Past, Present and Future 1962- 1982, Volume 1): History of Bihar School of Yoga under the guidance of Swami Satyananda Saraswati*. Detailed documentation of activities and accomplishments in Australia is given in the book, *Swami Satyananda Saraswati's Australian Journey 1968 – 1984*. Detailed documentation of activities

and accomplishments in Europe exists in the form of two books: *History of Satyananda Yoga in Greece Volume 1 with Swami Satyananda Saraswati* and *Satyananda Yoga in Italy*. Swami Satyananda Saraswati, *Inspiration – Italian Tours (1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984)*, *Development – Satyananda Yoga in Italy (1980 – 2009)*.

There is however no detailed chronological documentation of Swami Satyananda Saraswati's activities and accomplishments in the rest of Europe during the years 1968 – 1983. To fill this gap in documentation it was decided to publish a series of volumes entitled, *Satyananda Yoga in Europe 1968 - 1983* of which the present volume is the second covering the years 1971 - 1979. The first volume covered the years 1968 – 1970. The series is based on a very large data base of recordings of lectures, satsangs and yoga practices given by Swami Satyananda Saraswati which were mostly made by Rishis Arundhati and Vasishtha during their association with Sri Swamiji since 1968. The series will contain

transcriptions of all the material in the database. The first three volume will contain lectures, followed by volumes containing satsangs and completed by volumes containing all practices taught.

During editing we strive to preserve Sri Swamiji's words and phraseology as far as accuracy and correctness allow. Since Rishis Arundhati and Vasishtha were present at most of the venues documented they will provide contextual material allowing the reader to get some idea of the state of knowledge and practices of yoga at the time, the cultural atmosphere at the time and above all give some insight into the masterful, efficient, yet liberal, loving and friendly nature of Swami Satyananda Saraswati which all of his disciples and those who have had the good fortune of his darshan have come to treasure.

Hari Om Tat Sat

*Rishi Arundhati and Rishi Vasishtha
Satyanandashram Canada*

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

How does one describe the infinite number of facets of a siddha, one who has achieved the highest accomplishments or siddhis of all forms of yoga? The shastras say that such a one's nature is beyond definition, *anakhya*, and beyond words and thought.

One way of revealing the nature of Sri Swamiji is by means of his own words and the practical instructions given by him which should be preserved for posterity as accurately as possible so that they may serve to inspire yoga aspirants in the future as they have in the past. This we are trying to do in this series of volumes for that part of his teachings consisting of lectures, satsangs, meditations and practical sessions which were recorded by us in Europe between 1968 and 1983, or made available to us by Swami Pragyamurti in England, Swami Janakananda in Denmark, Swami Devatmananda in France and Swami Atmananda in Northern Ireland and other organizers of programs in Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Spain and Holland. The material in our database and video recordings has been transcribed, entered into the computer and edited, and is presented in these volumes in their historical order preserving the actual words of Swamiji as far as editing for readability would allow. It is interesting to note that although Sri Swamiji gave many lectures on the same topic in the same year at different places or in subsequent years, no two lectures are identical and each lecture presents the topic from a different perspective.

Careful reading and study of these teachings will reveal many of the facets of Sri Swamiji's nature and it should be largely left to the readers to discover them for themselves. But nevertheless we will try to indicate what have been the facets of Sri Swamiji's personality that have impressed us the most over the years of our association with him from 1968 to the present.

Sri Swamiji was someone who had experienced the highest states of consciousness and who at the same time demonstrated supreme mastery of all aspects of practical life, which he viewed as the field of opportunity for furthering the spiritual evolution of mankind, both individually and collectively. One time in the early days of our association with Sri Swamiji, Rishi Vasishtha asked Sri Swamiji, "We have just heard of new terrible wars starting at present, and extreme suffering of the poor and disadvantaged due to this world wide strife amongst nations, religions and commercial concerns; and yet due to the widespread tourism of today one would expect that people of different races, nationalities would get to know each other better and would no longer be swayed by the falsehoods spread by war-mongering politicians and collectively resist participating in war. But the world does not seem to be getting any better, if anything it is becoming worse globally and not just locally as in the past and less technological periods. Why is the world not getting better as we hoped it would after the Second World War?" Sri Swamiji just said, "Vasishtha! Are you trying to deprive those who come after you of spiritual opportunity?" Thereby he clearly expressed his view of ordinary practical and worldly life. He also said in one of the lecture in these volumes. "Difficulties drive evolution!" This was also the sentiment of his

guru Swami Sivananda Saraswati who used to say, "Suffering is the crucible in which nature transforms man into super-man".

From a study of the teachings in these volumes it can also be seen that Sri Swamiji displayed a profound sensitivity to the needs of his audiences and contemporary events in the world at the time, thus presenting yoga and its practices in a manner relevant and acceptable to everybody regardless of station in life or previous exposure to yoga. But at the same time he was driven by the mission given to him by his guru to spread all forms of yoga from shore to shore and door to door in a pure, classical and rigorous form, but elucidated by insights obtained by direct personal experience as a result of his own yoga sadhana. In fact early on in his instructions to us he said that we should immediately begin to teach what we had learned from him and practiced under his guidance, and that we should teach only what we had practiced ourselves with success. He said that we know and have practically experienced enough to lead to success in attaining higher or deeper states of consciousness by persistently improving, increasing and intensifying our actual practice of what he had taught us.

But he also stressed that acharyas or teachers in the Satyananda (Bihar Yoga) tradition strive to obtain precise knowledge of the classical Sanskrit works on Yoga, Tantra, Veda, Puranas and Smritis, etc. Sri Swamiji gave Vasishtha the following advice before he asked him to give short introductory talks preceding some of his lecture just before mounting the podium. He would say, "Vasishtha, ten minutes on pranayama, classical!" Thus he indicated to Vasishtha the precise focus of what he was to say but this depended on his knowing

either Patanjali Yoga Sutras, Hatha Yoga Pradipika or Gerandha Samhita, for example.

In fact, Sri Swamiji consistently used a threefold structure in his approach to teaching any subject matter especially concerning Yoga and Tantra. Basically it involved presenting first a clear statement of the classical view of the matter quoting verbatim where possible. Secondly he would state what he personally had experienced and reasoned out for himself, that is, he would assume the attitude of, "After I have told you what is the case classically, I will tell you what I think!" Thirdly, he would say, "Now you reason out for yourself what you think!"

Vasishtha tells a funny story where this threefold principle of Sri Swamiji got him out of difficulty in front of a huge Indian audience in Toronto, Canada, where he was present on the speakers platform with the spiritual leaders of Sikhs, Jains, Hindus and Moslems. The first question that came from the audience was "What is your opinion of sex before marriage?" At that moment all the dignitaries on the platform turned towards Vasishtha expecting him to be the first to answer since they wanted to see how this European Swami would handle himself in this situation. Well it was easy using Sri Swamiji's principle. First he told the audience that the shastras say that it is not a good idea for the following reasons, etc. then he said that he however personally thought that a person who had had sex before marriage should not therefore be considered to be a bad person, etc and finally he said, "But of course you must make up your own mind about what you think!"

The third step in Sri Swamiji's approach to teaching clearly indicates complete absence of dogmatism in his

nature. He never asked us to believe or do anything just because some classical text or he said so but always encouraged us to use our own reasoning or *tarka*, to come to the same conclusion by ourselves, and only on this basis should we claim knowledge of the matter.

But above all Sri Swamiji stressed practical instruction over too much theorizing or discussing, without neglecting the presentation of a thorough scientific understanding of the practices and their results. Once the practices have been mastered and the resulting experiences are properly understood it is much easier to correctly explain theoretical aspects of yoga. As soon as Rishis Arundhati and Vasishtha met and were taught by Sri Swamiji, they immediately experienced that they needed to consult no further books nor seek any other teacher but that Sri Swamiji would give instructions wherever needed and asked for. Hence, it is a common experience for both Arundhati and Vasishtha that it was sufficient to meditate upon Sri Swamiji preceding any lecture or practical session they were to give and usually clear answers concerning what to do with the students would come to them. This has also been the experience of most of the sannyas disciples of Sri Swamiji throughout the world.

Concerning Sri Swamiji's personal behavior it can be said that in his public interaction with all he met, whether young or old, rich or poor, he was the epitome of common courtesy. He treated everyone with great and equal respect. He was everyone's friend. He was totally attuned to and devoted to serving the needs of others, physically, socially and spiritually. This devotion led to the development of the great variety of successful socially uplifting

aspects and activities at Ganga Darshan in Munger, Bihar and Rikhia Peeth in Jarkhand, as well as most centers of Satyanand yoga throughout India and the rest of the world. These activities are extensively documented already in many books published by the Yoga Publication Trust in recent years. Two of the most outstanding accomplishments in education and social transformation for the better are the creation of the two great and vivacious youth organizations, the Bal Yoga Mitra Mandal of Munger and the Kanyas and Batuks of Rikhia Peeth whose members number in the hundred thousands.

Sri Swamiji's personal life was the perfect example of simplicity, he kept around himself only a few bare essentials for personal hygiene and wore only two dhotis most of the time even sometimes in the cold climate of Europe as will be obvious from many of the photographs in this volume. However, his life was one of constant self-discipline and sadhana which was unsurpassed by anyone known to us and as confirmed by all his guru bhais in Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh, as well as, by Swami Satsanghananda Saraswati, the first Peeth Ishvari of Rikhia Peeth, who attended upon Swamiji throughout much of the period leading up to his mahasamadhi, and who once remarked to Rishi Vasishtha that most people have no idea of the rigorous disciplined life that Sri Swamiji leads when he is not in public.

Sri Swamiji also had a profound and spontaneous sense of humor which would constantly lead to explosions of laughter amongst his audience resulting in a relaxed atmosphere which would allow him to prepare the ground for the acceptance of difficult or controversial points he had to make to rectify

misconceptions about Yoga and Tantra, as well as, making embarrassing revelations about the character of society in general or yoga practitioners in particular more acceptable to those concerned.

His mastery of his affairs of ordinary life were only short of miraculous. Everything he initiated bloomed into the great and effective institutions and organizations promoting yoga and well conceived social service to the wider community which we can see today in India, Australia, Italy, Greece, Scandinavia, and throughout North and South America and most countries in the rest of the world.

Sri Swamiji personally designed most of the buildings at the Bihar School of Yoga in Munger and at Rikhia Peeth. These building are designed to attain maximum ease of cleaning and repairing, as well as, providing space for huge and varying numbers of residents, students, and visitors constituting an almost daily influx and change in such a way that housing can be reconfigured at a moments notice and in a most flexible and efficient manner.

Another aspect of Sri Swamiji's nature was his perfect ability to be accepted and respected in all levels of society and all walks of life from the rich and powerful to the poorest most disadvantaged, from intellectuals to those driven mostly by instinct, no matter what the level he would fit in while at the same time enhancing and raising the level of interaction and conversation of the present company. This demonstrated by example the nature of a true swami whose role in life is in Sri Swamiji's words, "To always be only uplifting at all times and all places and with every being you encounter in life. " Furthermore, another of Sri Swamiji's definitions of the nature of a true swami

was, "We swamis are caretakers and distributors of wealth and resources given to us by the affluent in society due to their devotion to spiritual life, to those who are poor, destitute and neglected in society in such a way that it is uplifting in the sense of inducing lasting self-dependence and economic independence while preserving self-respect and respect for the time tested ways and customs of their own which they have pragmatically absorbed in their daily life and which give dignity to their existence even though they are the poorest of the poor. One can clearly see how his presence in Rikhia brought prosperity to that whole area consisting of poor indigenous villages and even to the neighboring town of Deoghar.

In so many ways Sri Swamiji displayed perfect wisdom in action. If wisdom means the ability to bring knowledge and skill to bear on life in a manner that is conducive to the welfare and spiritual evolution of the individual and society as a whole, then this type of wisdom on the part of Sri Swamiji is amply demonstrated by the effective functioning of the different types of educational and uplifting institutions established by him over the years, as is well documented in existing publications of these institutions.

Sri Swamiji ensured permanence and excellence in these institutions in two ways. To insure excellence he initiated a very effective way of choosing a successor who can by his example inspire aspirants to the highest level of their spiritual evolution which is operative even now in preparing further successors. To ensure permanence he fully involved the local population in the building, maintenance and modification of the ashrams, as well as, having both adults and particularly large numbers of children involved in the daily activities

of the ashram and even more so during the large ceremonial occasions where they participate fully. The people feel that it is their ashram and therefore it will exist permanently if it continues to provided excellence of inspiration, guidance, medical aid and education to the people.

In spite of the overwhelming powers of his nature Sri Swamiji always displayed humility. He always said that he was not a guru, but only the disciple of his guru Swami Sivananda. He said that we his disciples insisted on making him guru and that he never wanted it. He was also very open when required knowledge from anyone who had expertise in some special area, especially in science. He constantly wanted to know what the latest theories and experimental results of science were. He was able to absorb even the most technical details very quickly and arrive at the basic principles involved, and he would then use this information in his next lecture. On the other hand if you spoke about something without proper knowledge or personal experience of the matter he would swiftly censure you for pretending to know more than you do and wasting everybody's time.

Finally, we can only say that we could go on for many pages and never run out of ways to describe the many facets of the jewel , Sri Swamiji Satyananda. Everyone we interacted with living at Ganga Darshan and Rikhia Peeth and who have served Sri Swamiji for many years say that to this day, every day, they discover another way in which Sri Swamiji displayed his spiritual genius and organizational skills in even the smallest aspect of the overall functioning of the legacy we call Satyananda Yoga or Bihar Yoga.

Hari Om Tat Sat

1971

March

Sri Swamiji travelled from Munger to London and Belfast with Swami Niranjanananda, his youngest sannyasin disciple, who stayed on in Europe. Sri Swamiji also visited Paris, Copenhagen, Vienna and Iran.

May

He then flew to Belfast with Swami Satyamitrananda from BSY, inaugurated the ashram there and stayed for the month of June, conducting a Yoga Teacher Training Course.

In 1968 when Swami Satyananda Saraswati first came to Europe there was only one Satyananda Ashram in Europe, and that was in Paris, France, under the direction of Swami Devatamananda Saraswati. Three years later in 1971, there were four Satyananda Ashrams operating in Europe, the one in Paris; one in Vienna, Austria, under the direction of Rishis Arundhati and Vasishtha; one in Copenhagen, Denmark under the direction of Swami Janakananda Saraswati; and one in Belfast, Northern Ireland, under the direction of Swami Atmananda Saraswati who had taken over the directorship from Rishis Arundhati and Vasishtha when they returned to Vienna. These existing ashrams made it easier for Sri Swamiji to conduct more advanced, intensive and lengthier yoga instruction within the disciplined ashram environment with greater benefit for the yoga aspirants participating and who had been adequately prepared by the resident swamis for Sri Swamiji's further instruction and initiation into the sannyasa tradition, if so desired. The lectures given by

Swami Satyananda Saraswati in Europe on his fourth overseas tour in 1971, which are included in this second volume of the series containing his teachings in Europe 1968–1983, give clear evidence of this deepening of the understanding of yoga and the intensification of the sadhanas taught by him in the previous three years. The latter will become even more evident in the subsequent volumes which are intended to cover all practical techniques taught by Sri Swamiji during the period in question.

The first series of four lectures was given in London, England, on the topics of Prana Vidya, Kriya Yoga, Kundalini Yoga and Mantra Yoga. The first lecture is an elementary introduction to Prana Vidya, a science or technique for healing one-self or others.

In the second lecture Sri Swamiji on Kriya Yoga Sri Swamiji points out that it is intended for those who find it difficult to concentrate and that concentration has to arise spontaneously as the culmination of Kriya Yoga practice. In this lecture Sri Swamiji also makes an important distinction between external and internal pranayama, the latter involving mudras and bandhas.

The third lecture was given at Gandolph's Garden in London and is a general introduction to Kundalini Yoga clarifying some prevalent misconceptions about this form of yoga as well as giving instructions about how yoga aspirants should try to discover which of their chakras are awakened or beginning to awake. The lecture is followed by questions and answers put to Sri Swamiji immediately following the lecture.

The fourth lecture was given at the Hindu Center in London on the subject of Mantra Yoga and at the outset Sri Swamiji emphasizes that this yoga is very important for awakening the spiritual consciousness of man. He states that by means of mantra man can reach the deepest planes or lokas of experience or consciousness. He explains various techniques of mantra japa and describes benefits derived there from.

International Yoga Fellowship Movement and London Yoga Centre

A N N O U N C E

PARAMHANSA SWAMI SATYANANDA SARASWATI

(Bihar School of Yoga)

will speak on

MONDAY March 1st at 8.00 p.m. at Acacia House,
The Vale (off Uxbridge Road), W.3.

THURSDAY March 4th at 7.30 p.m. at Caxton Hall
(Tudor Room)

FRIDAY March 5th at 7.30 p.m. at
Gandolph's Garden, King's Road, S.W.3.

SUNDAY March 7th at 4.00 p.m. at The Hindu
Centre, 39 Grafton Terrace, N.W.5.

A D M I S S I O N F R E E

Private appointments by arrangement for 1st - 7th March.
Telephone 373 2354

For further details of Swamiji's appointments on Tuesday and Wednesday, please telephone 373 2354 or 673 4869 for information

Prana Vidya

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Acacia House, The Vale,

London, England, March 1, 1971

The pranic force sometimes gets blocked up because of psychic and psychological reasons due to some karmic effects. This Shakti or this pranic force does not penetrate throughout the body, it is not in a manifested state and it becomes dormant. Even like in the physical body the secretions are dormant, such as acidity, or the pancreatic juices, or the saliva, or other enzymes are suppressed, the potentiality is there but it is suppressed due to psychological or psychic factors. In the same way, due to the karma, mental karma and physical karma, this pranic force gets blocked sometimes, and it is not able to guide, it is not able to influence, or it is not able to infuse the physical matter with life. It is in this context that in the Vedic system they have talked about a science known as prana vidya.

You have heard a lot about yoga asanas and pranayama, also about various meditations as enunciated by Indians, Hindus, Christians, Buddhists and Muslims. But this particular science of prana vidya from the Vedic scriptures is the science which pertains to the practices of self-healing. That is to say, it is the knowledge about the pranic force, or more accurately, the knowledge of the pranic structure of human existence. You are aware of the structure of your physical existence. You know that you have two hands, you know that you have two feet, and so many different organs in the body. That is the knowledge of your physical structure. In the same way you have knowledge about your psychological or mental structure. In the same way you should have knowledge of your pranic structure, or the structure of the pranic force.

According to the Vedic scriptures and according to the great rishis, the great teachers and the great yogis this pranic force is everything in you. If you decompose this physical matter into subtle particles, as you reduce the



matter, uranium etc. into different subtle forces or energies, if you reduce this physical matter into subtle forces and energies you will come to a point where you will see the pranic force or the vital energy. The principle of reduction or the principle of breaking up, as known to you from physics leads to fission and the release of energy etc. Here in the realm of prana the same thing is to be done. The aspirant, who wants to develop the science of prana vidya, or the art of the release of Shakti, has to break this matter and to separate the energy principle from the matter of which the body is composed. This is to be done with a fundamental belief that first of all each and every part of the body contains prana. When this prana is not active, then the man is sick and ailing.

Now, this prana is to be awakened, it is to be aroused. Whether it is a disease related to the bones or to the nervous system, or whether it is a problem of the eyes, or whether it is psychological, if you know how to awaken this faculty of prana, this force of prana, you can heal yourself completely. But you will have to know the pranic circuits which are very difficult for me to tell you about in a very short time, because it is a very complicated matter. It is said in the Vedas and the Upanishads that there are 72,000 channels through which the pranic forces flow forwards and backwards. That is why tranquilizers work so that when you take them you feel better in the morning; not because of the tranquilizers but the tranquilizers have helped you to get a psychological and emotional grip on the physical body which is responsible for the dormancy of the prana. So the pranas were helping you through the night and not really the tranquilizers. It was your own prana that was helping you, that could flow for some

time, because the natural time for the prana flow is at night when you sleep, in deep meditation, and also at the time when you are practicing pranayama. There are other moments also when the pranas are flowing freely and there is no block.

It is said that the vital force, the pranic force, is distributed throughout the body with the help of 72,000 *nadis*, that is to say, nerve channels. These nerve channels are the vehicle of this flow of dynamic consciousness. Prana can be thought of as dynamic consciousness. Out of these 72,000 nadis, we consider ten to be important. Out of these ten nadis that flow inside the spinal cord, three are considered to be most important. These three are the Ida, the Pingala and the Sushumna. Sometimes we talk about them also as the sympathetic nervous system, parasympathetic nervous system and central nervous system. But it is not final whether they are identical to these latter systems.

According to investigations made, Ida is the cold channel, Pingala is the warm or hot channel and Sushumna is completely quiet. Now, it has been seen in France, where investigations have been made by a few doctors, and I had the privilege to see them and be with them for sometime, that the left nostril, the left breath has lower temperature than the right one. Ida is called the cold nadi and Pingala is called the hot nadi, and this difference has been investigated as stated above. At the same time we call Ida the moon channel and Pingala the sun channel, that is, the lunar channel and the solar channel, respectively. In India, many people prefer to call Ida as Yamuna and Pingala as Ganga, and the central one is called Saraswati. However, these three nadis are important

channels. Out of these three nadis, the Pingala, that is the right one, which is the solar nadi, is the one which is responsible for awakening the healing forces in the body. This Pingala nadi which flows through the right nostril is responsible for producing heat, exciting, stimulating digestive secretions, causing more acidity, rather hyperacidity, and improving the peristaltic activity in the intestines.

It is said that if you close the left channel for sometime, and allow the right channel to function for about six to eight hours, the heat in the body increases, as I have experienced myself. Whenever, I close the left nostril for about two hours, I feel physical heat, and it is possible for me to walk the streets of London without being burdened by coats and sweaters, and if I close the right nostril in India even in the summer I feel cool. The right nostril or breath is responsible for healing and therefore, in prana vidya, in the science of healing through the awakening of the pranic force, you have to practice in Pingala and not Ida.

When Pingala is flowing and Ida is not flowing, that is the time you have to practice self-healing. Now, the flow of Ida and Pingala changes according to the bright fortnight and the dark fortnight. I cannot go into details here, but I can point out that the flow in Ida and Pingala does not flow constantly. For one hour and twenty five minutes, the right nostril flows and then for one hour and twenty five minutes the left nostril begins to flow. After the same amount of time the left stops and the right flows again. At the time of sunrise in the bright fortnight, or the first day of the bright fortnight after the dark fortnight the Ida, the left nostril starts flowing, and this continues for three days until on the fourth day at sunrise the Pingala will be

flowing at first, and then Ida, then Pingala etc. In the interval between the change over Sushumna will flow for a moment, that is, there is a minute or two, when both flow equally. That is called Sushumna, and if you sit for meditation at that time, the meditation will become successful, spontaneously. You do not have to do ajapa japa, you do not have to do anything. The mind becomes so quiet, but only for a few moments, and then again alternation between Ida and Pingala commences. After three days there is a change. On the fourth, fifth and sixth day, at the time of sunrise, in the bright fortnight, the right nostril will start to flow, the seventh, eighth and ninth, the left nostril will flow, tenth, eleventh and twelfth the right nostril will flow, always changing after about 90 minutes.

Now, you have to know the time. You have to know this prana, and you must have the knowledge of the nadis, you have to have the knowledge of the swara, you have to know that it is the time for the Pingala nadi to flow. Today is not the dark fortnight. At sunrise, if my health is alright, I check. For me now Sushumna is flowing. But if it is sunrise and Pingala is flowing, then I begin to practice prana vidya. Prana vidya, the science of self-healing, should not be practiced when the moon or the lunar nadi is flowing.

All the people in India who practice the art of healing, when a person comes to them, they always check to see which nostril is dominant. When the Pingala is flowing they treat the sick. You also in the western countries sometimes succeed and sometimes you do not succeed. They have to understand that when they did succeed, they were working at the period of Pingala nadi, and if they failed, they must have been working under the influence of Ida nadi. Many times they do

succeed and many times they do not. This Pingala nadi can be utilized for the purpose of healing.

The pranayama which has to be done in prana vidya is ujjayi. From Muladhara following the Pingala nadi you draw up the breath in ujjayi up to Ajna, practice it 49 to 50 times, just ascending and descending. When you have done it 49 times, ascending and descending, then the final ascending should be made, and then consciousness and the breath should be retained in Ajna. Do it in then in this way about 50 times. Then after 50 times, ascending with the breath to Ajna, retaining it in Ajna and then distribute. Now the prana or the vital force is to be distributed with the help of the consciousness to any particular part of the body.

When healing takes place there is an indication. If the healing does not take place you can understand it, and if the healing is taking place you will know subtly or psychologically. Now, you know the place where you have to heal yourself. You do ujjayi 50 times, retain 50 times, and then you distribute the prana. Now, this distribution has to be done fast, from Ajna to the point, from Ajna to the point, from Ajna to the point, where you need the healing prana. Finally, when the healing is taking place, in all the cases we have known, the patient of course is relaxed; he feels that he is getting better. But there are feelings of electric shock. That is the uniform experience of all the people. The electric shocks are not very strong; they are mild, low voltage electric shocks. The moment the electric shocks are felt you are finished. Then you withdraw the prana back to Ajna and then down to Muladhara.

The science of prana vidya is a very ancient science which has been described in the Vedic texts and later

on in other Sanskrit texts. We are trying to develop the science of prana vidya so that people can be their own doctors, so that they may be their own healers, not only of the physical body but also of the psychic, spiritual and emotional ailments. It is not only the physical but also the psychic and emotional ailments that can be safely and successfully treated with this practice of prana vidya. In order to be successful in the practice of prana vidya it is considered to be very important that the person who is going to apply this healing to himself should live on an absolute vegetarian diet. Even milk is not allowed. If you are going to practice on yourself, you can not say that I am not eating meat, I only eat fish. I am not talking against eating meat, but I am talking about healing and in the context of healing I have to state the truth. It is not a question of killing an animal; it is a question of the toxins which interfere with the rarification of the pure prana so even milk is not allowed. For the time being, until you are completely healed, the diet should be as pure as possible, what we call sattvic diet and milk does not come under the category of sattvic diet when one practices on oneself. Those who are going to practice healing on others, I am talking about healers, they should not take milk, nor butter or ghee and of course not chicken and meat. Not because of cruelty to animals, although that is a reason also, but the most important reason is that it interferes with the power of healing and it interferes with the successful practice of prana vidya. Therefore, all the people who want to be healers, and who want to heal themselves, mentally, physically and emotionally, must also take this into account.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Kriya Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

London, England, March 4, 1971

Blessed spiritual seekers,
Hari Om Tat Sat

I came to London in September and August; again I am coming in June and maybe in September. Last time when I came many sincere seekers wanted to know about Kriya Yoga. They also wanted me to conduct classes, to give lessons on Kriya Yoga. I promised that I would come and therefore this time I am here in London, then I go to Belfast to inaugurate the yoga school there, and also to take Kriya Yoga classes, then to Denmark, Paris, Munich, Vienna and elsewhere.

The name Kriya Yoga comes from the ancient systems of India. The rishis, the spiritually enlightened people in India discovered various techniques for the evolution of human consciousness. In order to separate the spiritual from gross matter, to initiate in the life of a man the process of fission, the separation of the two elements, they introduced different practices, such as Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga, Raja Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Mantra Yoga and Kriya Yoga also. It was thought by the teachers of yoga that concentration of mind is the secret for the development of intuition; that a one-pointed mind was the secret for the realization of the higher consciousness in man. When there are distractions you become aware of the external life of the body and the senses, and when the mind becomes quiet and evolves to one point, then

the unfoldment of the inner life takes place. This inner life is awareness and its manifestations. It was also thought that for the one-pointed concentration of mind you have the practices such as mantra and other practices of concentration such as Nada Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and so on.

But there is a dialogue in the ancient texts of Tantra which is a direct offshoot of the Vedic religion. The dialogue is between the two great personalities, between Shiva and Parvati. Parvati, the embodiment of Shakti and also the disciple of Lord Shiva, asked Lord Shiva what was the easiest way for the fulfillment of



the spiritual desires and spiritual accomplishments in life. Lord Shiva, the embodiment of the Supreme Power replied to Parvati that there were many different forms of yoga, there were many systems through which one could proceed to and undergo the path of evolution. But then Parvati said, "Lord, the minds of people are so much distracted, the samskaras, the subconscious and the subliminal mind is so vitiated, the subterranean mental life of man is so full of conflict and suppression and complexes."

Externally, based on the face which we present to society, you and I may think that we are peaceful, but it is not certain that our inner life, which you do not know, may be full of peace, or may be full of divinity, or may be full of calmness. There may be explosions. You may not be aware of them, not even the psychologists are aware of them. In that case, what are you going to do? How are we going to find the ultimate source of life? It is then that Lord Shiva instructed Parvati in the secrets of a yoga known as Kriya Yoga.

He said to Parvati that there are the yoga paths which always emphasize one-pointed concentration, withdrawal of the mind when it is disturbed, whenever the mind runs outside, wanders away from the central point of concentration, you withdraw it, bring it back again to the point of concentration. This is their general theme. But in Kriya Yoga the theme is quite different.

Whether the mind wanders away, it does not matter. Whether there are thousands of distractions, do not worry, the kriya will do its job. It will bring about a change in the nervous system, in the chemical system in the body and ultimately it will influence the thinking process of mind. Therefore, in the practices of Kriya Yoga, the first instruction that is given is to

remember that you are not being asked to concentrate. Therefore, Kriya Yoga differs from other forms of yoga in that it does not rest on the means of one-pointed concentration. Concentration has to be spontaneous as Swami Sivananda has written in his book *Concentration and Meditation*. Meditation and concentration has to come by itself. Even as when we cause sleep through drugs and it is no sleep at all because it has to be spontaneous, it has to be the culmination of a state of body and mind. In the same way, meditation also has to be such a culmination.

You do not meditate, meditation comes to you. You get into that mood when the preparations are complete. You pull your mind as you pull a wild horse. If the horse is stronger it will drag you, pull you and kick you out. Of course, if the horse is weaker you might succeed for some time. When the mind is full of distractions and it is filled up with the demands of the lower life, you cannot bring it back to the point of concentration. You have to pacify it; you have to bring about a state of equilibrium through some indirect method. That is done through Kriya Yoga as well as internal pranayama. Maybe most of you have heard about the external pranayama, such as inhalation, retention and exhalation. But there is also internal pranayama, and this internal pranayama takes the form of mudras and bandhas. The kriya yogi takes help from these mudras and bandhas and thereby he tries to awaken the Prana Shakti within himself, and with the help of the awakened Prana Shakti he attains a certain state of equilibrium and tranquility.

Then, if you are to concentrate you have to sit in siddhasana or in the lotus pose or vajrasana, or sukhāsana for about one hour. It is difficult for many

people to maintain a steady posture for one full hour. But in Kriya Yoga you do not have to sit in one posture for one hour. You can change after ten minutes or after fifteen minutes, and this changing of the posture does not make any difference in the flow of evolution of consciousness.

In other yoga systems you have to close your eyes. With your eyes closed, either you hypnotize yourself or you sleep, or enter into the land of visions. The visions may be very encouraging but it is not sure that the visions you will have in your meditation may mean anything in your spiritual life. They may only be the expressions of your subconscious mind. They may not be higher experiences. You may not know what category they belong to. Therefore, in Kriya Yoga you are asked to keep your eyes open. In many of the practices of Kriya Yoga the eyes are kept open as you are doing now and you keep on practicing the kriyas, the spiritual actions, the internal actions, for about half an hour, changing your posture every now and then. There arises a demand after some time; there is a pressure from inside that you must close your eyes. Most people when they begin to practice Kriya Yoga have great difficulty in keeping the eyes open for such a long time. Every time the practitioners come to me and ask me if they could close their eyes whenever they like I tell them they must not. Whereas in other systems of yoga you have to work hard to achieve concentration, and I do not mean to disparage the other systems since I also teach them, in Kriya Yoga you have to work hard to avoid concentration. It comes so fast.

There are kriyas one, two, three, four etc, up to twenty six, and you have to fulfill what you are supposed

to do in each kriya. If one kriya has to be done twenty nine times or forty nine times, you should practice twenty nine or forty nine times in that particular way. If you want to go into deep meditation I say no, control it. You are not only to control the distraction of the mind, you must have the power and the capacity to control even the introversion of the mind and stop the mind from going in. The difficulty facing the aspirant is how to control the mind when it is going in. Certain kriyas are to be performed eleven times. The aspirants will find it very difficult to fulfill it. By the time they are practicing it for the sixth time they loose consciousness. They have to come out by force. Kriya Yoga has a system of its own where the mind does not have to achieve one pointed concentration, the mind is left spontaneous. You have to move, you have to act, you have to think, and the mind has to remember, and the kriyas have to be fulfilled according to the rules that are laid down. A particular kriya has to be done for eleven times, the next one for nine times, the third one for thirteen times and some others thirty nine, forty nine, fifty nine, eleven, four, four, and so on. Each and everything has to be guided. In Kriya Yoga the practitioner himself is his own guru, is his own teacher.

Thus it is a method in Kriya Yoga where the guru is always with you. In this spiritual pilgrimage when you are going inside to the higher dimensions of your consciousness you need a companion, you need a guide, you need someone to whom you can talk and you need someone who can talk to you. But this is so impossible. How can you have a guru always with you? In Kriya Yoga they have evolved a system; I am not going to tell you all about how the guru is always with you. In all the practices of Kriya Yoga, ten, twelve,

twenty six, you always listen to the voice of the guru. You have to train yourself to such an extent, in such a way, that the speaker, that the guide, that the leader of your consciousness is always talking to you and of course you are listening. You know that it is not in the realm of feeling, it is in the realm of hearing and listening and talking.

This state of affairs has to be developed. If I am sitting quietly here I have to develop a dimension, I have to develop a personality out of myself which will tell me to go to the right side. I must be listening to that voice. Now, you can sit down and close your eyes and this is the voice which you will hear. How can I hear this voice? I have to train myself. Every day, in the morning, I have to train myself. I repeat the mantra, Om Namah Shivaya, every morning, consciously. As soon as I get out of bed the mantra is on my lips, the mantra is in my mind, the mantra is in my heart, because I have trained myself to be aware of the mantra for so many years. In Kriya Yoga you have to take the first training with the practice so that you evolve the guidance. You evolve a system of guidance, a spiritual leadership of your consciousness. So, the consciousness always tells you, "Breathe in, concentrate on a particular part, now practice this kriya." You always feel that there is someone who is guiding you through and that there is absolutely no tension.

You do not have to feel what you have to do next. Take for instance the japa of the mantra. Please remember that I am not criticizing because I am a teacher of Japa Yoga also, but I must compare things. I give you a mantra, say it is Om Namah Shivaya, you are a very good aspirant so you sit in the lotus pose and close your eyes. You chant Om Namah Shivaya and

you go in. Now what are you going to do next? It is not clear to you. You can not have your guru by your side. Your guru can only tell you that you must practice your mantra, Om Namah Shivaya, withdraw your mind from all the quarters of consciousness. You will have nice visions and you will forget everything that belongs to outside life and that is all.

After some time, when your consciousness is becoming separated from the external life, you do not know what to do next, and what is going to happen, and what should be the right happening. I am talking about the psychic events. I am talking about the higher mental events. What is going to happen, what should happen; and what should happen nobody knows? Nobody can even give the direction because the path here is noble. I am talking about Japa Yoga. I am talking about the easier path, not doubt. But it is not a mathematical and well calculated path. In Kriya Yoga it is absolutely calculated. Every step is clearly indicated and the aspirant does not have to worry about what is going to be the next step. If I am practicing kriya number four, for example, I am clearly instructed to practice the action so many times, in such a way, up to a certain point.

Now, in the meanwhile I am dropping in, visions are trying to float, I say "No!", because I have to practice what I have been instructed. Say it is pranayama. I have been instructed to practice a particular pranayama system twenty one times, and twenty one times within a certain range such as, one it is six, two it is six, twenty it is six, twenty one it is six. I know that I have to do is this particular system of breathing twenty one times up to this action; neither this way nor that way. If by chance, in between, my mind is dropping in, I know that



is it should not drop in because I have been instructed to practice that particular spiritual exercise twenty one times in this particular way and I am asked not to worry about the result, not to worry about any experience, even if it is the experience of enlightenment, even if it is the experience of complete samadhi, even if I am trying to break through the dimension, through the wall of this gross matter. No, I must complete these twenty one rounds.

The spiritual aspirant has a completely thought out path and there is nothing for him to worry about, which is the beauty of Kriya Yoga. Even if you take the meditational side, because Kriya Yoga has stages and at the end there is a meditational side, that is called dhyana, and in it there also a very clear system of meditation is carved out for him. As to how he is to practice meditation on Muladhara or on Sahasrara, for how long, and how he should understand the time, how he must have the concept of time. What kind of experiences must he have, and how he could control

those experiences? For how long he must have those experiences and when to switch to the next?

In short, Kriya Yoga is a combination of the fifth, sixth and seventh step of Raja Yoga; pratyahara, dharana, and dhyana. *Pratyahara* is the separation or disconnection of sense cortex and motor cortex. The senses are completely detached from the mind. The awareness and sensations are separated, that is pratyahara. Mind is functioning through the medium of the senses. When the mind is withdrawn and it does not function through the medium of the senses, but is functioning subconsciously on the internal plane of consciousness, that is pratyahara.

When that takes place, then the subjective consciousness is to be formulated on one pattern. That is called *dharana*, a kind of pictorial mandala. In Kriya Yoga you do not just formulate a pictorial mandala but it is a system by itself, depending upon pranayama, mudras, bandhas and many other symbols which they have. By the time you come to the last point of Kriya Yoga, there must be many people in this room that are doing it, you feel so quiet so that even if you try to disturb the mind by distracting thoughts the mind refuses to be influenced. It is at that time when your mind is completely prepared that the meditation starts. You close your eyes and spontaneously everything happens. You do not have to exert your consciousness even a little bit.

The practice of Kriya Yoga is for those people who find it very hard to concentrate on one point. Again, kindly remember, you people in the west are very much aware of this, that when you have made a departure from the normal functions of consciousness, at that time you can experience hell and heaven both, and

those who have had trips on LSD, or ganja or hashish and other drugs, if you ask them, they will confirm those experiences. Their experiences are not the same; everything depends upon the contents of your consciousness, that is, the samskaras. If the samskaras are not very nice, if there are complexes, psychological obsessions, inhibitions and many other psychological illnesses, they will manifest when you concentrate forcibly. When you concentrate with force on a particular point what happens? You immediately dive deep within the subterranean levels and you see every thing which you do not like. You see everything which you hate. That thing which you have hated in your life has always lived in the background because you do not want it. But once you enter into the underground of your life you see everything. With the awareness, everything you have hated and avoided comes up and that influences your experience.

In Kriya Yoga it is not like that. The question of concentration is completely avoided and the change, whether in the physiological structure of the brain, or whether it is in the constitution of the cerebral-spinal fluid, but it is definitely brought about through the nervous system. If your mind is full of distractions and you take any drug, within a few minutes you are calm and quiet because the influence is through the nervous system. In Kriya Yoga we try to supply this great change by constant practices of pranayama, by the mudras and the bandhas and many other things which affect the brain, the nervous system and the glandular system, without the negative effects resulting from forced concentration or the taking of drugs.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Kundalini Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

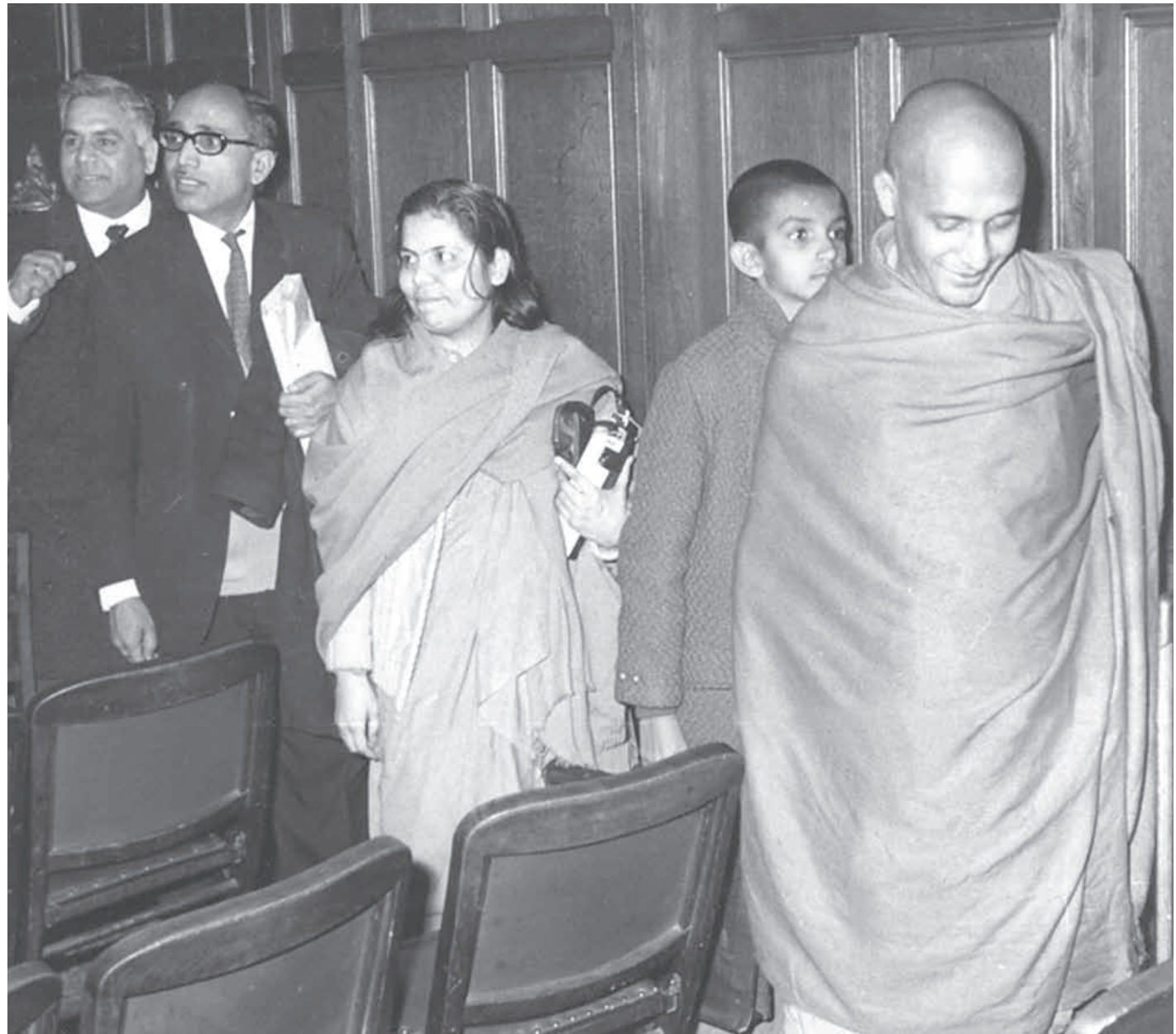
Gandolph's Garden,

London, England, March 5, 1971

Blessed spiritual seekers,
Hari Om Tat Sat

This is the first time for me to be here with you. The subject is Kundalini Yoga as I understand it, and I have been thinking about it for many years. When I talk about kundalini I am not talking about a metaphysical force. I am talking about something that is intrinsically connected with this physical body which you and I have. I do not want to go very far, talking about the subtle realms, the astral body and so on. I believe what I personally know. Kundalini is immediately connected with the human organism, the human body, and the awakening of kundalini is a very important matter, and at the same time it can be taken up by everyone.

There are some things about kundalini that should be cleared up. At the root of the spinal cord in the perineum in the masculine body and on the posterior side of the uterus in the feminine body there is a special gland and that is physical and that has to be activated. But that is not all about Kundalini Yoga. There are



various centers of power in the human body attached to the spinal column, attached to the spinal cord, and these centers of power are intimately connected to the higher centers in the brain. The whole thing can be divided into seven parts, and each psychic center controls one particular part of the brain. As you have a switchboard with seven or eight switches more or less, and each controlling a different cell, or a different bulb or a different electric machine, in the same way this brain has millions of circuits with a lot of potentialities. In fact, the seat of kundalini is in the brain and this should be understood correctly.

The seat of kundalini is in Sahasrara, is in the brain, and not in Muladhara. But you cannot awaken this kundalini directly. You cannot awaken the ultrasonic or the supersonic or higher faculties of the brain by some other method. Those particular divisions or those particular areas of the brain are connected with the nadis or nerve fibers which run down to different parts of the body through the spinal column. From one part of the brain comes a nadi which goes to Bindu, from another part of the brain comes a nadi which goes to Ajna chakra, and from another part it goes to Vishuddhi, Anahata, Manipura, Swadhisthana, and Muladhara. Each of these centers is independent; they are not connected with each other. This is one mistake the scholars and intellectuals have been making in the past.

All the books that have been written say that kundalini rises up through each chakra on its way to Sahasrara. This is not correct. Every center, every chakra such as Muladhara is directly connected to the brain. Swadhisthana, the hyper-gastric plexus is directly connected to the brain. Manipura, the solar plexus, is

directly connected to the brain. Similarly, Anahata, the cardiac plexus, Vishuddhi, the cervical plexus, Ajna, the pineal gland, at the top of the spinal cord, Bindu the cranial point, are all directly connected to the brain. When you practice Kundalini Yoga and you say that you are trying to awaken kundalini, please understand that you are trying to awaken kundalini which is not at the bottom, but which is at the top. The awakening of the great centers of the brain, which are not only gross, but which are vehicles of higher knowledge, cannot be dealt with directly. First of all you have to know which particular part of the brain you want to awaken.

If you concentrate on Muladhara, or if you are practicing certain kriyas for the stimulation of the Muladhara center, the sensation is carried up to the top, and that is called awakening of the particular center. It is in this sense that you have to understand Kundalini Yoga now. Up to this time, everybody has been telling us that kundalini resides at the bottom in Muladhara, and when you awaken the kundalini in Muladhara then it moves upward through Swadhisthana and other centers. Sometimes it comes back to Muladhara and sometimes it goes beyond Manipura center. It is this concept we have to change in our understanding.

Awakening of kundalini can take place from any center according to your evolution, according to your structural evolution. Some of you may find Muladhara, the basic center easiest. If you concentrate on it, the awakening takes place. Many of you will find Ajna center, which is in a straight line behind the mid eyebrows, to be easiest. Others may find Anahata chakra or the cardiac plexus easier to awaken. But you cannot awaken even these chakras directly, because

they are situated on the inner wall of the spinal column, that is to say, on the interior side not the posterior side of the spinal column. It is the interior side of the spinal column on which these centers or these chakras are situated. Each chakra is a junction for the nadis. The nerves or the *nadis* which come from the higher centers in the brain are distributed throughout the body, to different organs of the body through these junctions. For instance, take Manipura center, the solar plexus. The nadis come from the higher centers in the brain and from Manipura chakra they are distributed, whether it is by the Ida nadi or the Pingala nadi, that is to say the sympathetic and the parasympathetic nerve channels, they come to a point and from there the nadis are distributed and control the kidneys, the bladder, the ovaries and different sections of the body. So the awakening has to take place through indirect methods. These are called the connecting centers. If you concentrate on the navel or if you concentrate on the sternum, or if you concentrate on the throat, or if you concentrate on the mid eyebrow center you are only creating a sensation which passes through the nerves, goes to the chakra proper and travels up to the brain.

In the practice of Kundalini Yoga you have to remember those centers through which the concentration has to start. The concentration must be keen; it must be intense, one-pointed. If you are not able to concentrate then you will have to utilize other methods, the methods of asanas. There is not just one method, there are other methods also. If you concentrate on the navel, intense concentration on the navel produces a sensation, which is started at the navel, but it is felt at the top in the brain. But if intense

concentration is not possible, you will have to use what we call the asanas, the yogic postures which are eighty four in number. You know these yogic postures as a part of Hatha Yoga, but they are not. Hatha Yoga is one thing and yoga asanas is something else. It will take much time to correct this error in the west. Some of the yoga postures are very important for the awakening of these chakras. *Sarvangasana*, the shoulder stand as you call it, is the Vishuddhi awakening posture. *Matsyasana*, the fish pose, is the Anahata awakening pose. *Shashankasana* is not the pelvic toning pose but it is the Swadhisthana awakening pose. By the practice of the asanas you try to stimulate, you try to awaken the particular center in the body and then the awakening takes place at the top in the Sahasrara. This is the basic concept of Kundalini Yoga, which is of course my own personal concept, and I will not accept anything else. Those of you who are conversant with the Gita will know that in the fifteenth chapter a tree which is topsy turvey, with its roots above and its branches below is talked about and this is the concept of kundalini. One has to start from the top of the tree which is topsy turvey the roots, and go to the trunk and branches. It is the roots that are the basis of the whole tree, and the brain is the roots, the spinal cord is the trunk and the twigs and the branches spread all over in the form of the nadis.

In the practice of Kundalini Yoga we have to have knowledge about the nadis. There are many nadis through which the consciousness flows. For the smooth flow of consciousness the nadis are to be utilized. The word nadi as translated into English is called nerve. But it is not so. In Sanskrit *nadi* means an event of flowing, the consciousness flows through the nadis. The

consciousness flows forwards and the consciousness flows backwards. That is to say, when a sensation is created it travels backwards to the top and then again from there, the expression travels forwards. There is a double motion. One is the backward motion and the other is the forward motion. Awakening of kundalini is the backward motion; expression of kundalini is the forward motion. Sri Aurobindo talks about it as ascending and descending. Ascending kundalini means the creation of a strong conscious power through concentration and then it is carried backwards, that is to say in the ascending stage to the top. From there the expression of the sensation starts, which is the power of purusha, and it goes forwards and that is the manifestation the power of prakriti. One is known as awakening and the other is known as incarnation, awakening of Shakti is Kundalini Yoga, and incarnation of Shakti is the expression of that power. In this way, each and every nadi is the vehicle for the flow of consciousness.

If you care to concentrate in Ajna chakra, that is in the mid eyebrow center, if you succeed in keen concentration, two things are going to happen. First, keen concentration will awaken a particular consciousness, a powerful consciousness, and this will travel backwards through a particular passage to a specific center in the brain, and the awakening takes place, and that is brought back and what happens is that you see the light, you see the vision, you see the dazzling light, you are having higher, astral or psychic experiences. That is called manifestation. Any experience, or any vision, mystic or occult, or any form of light, or any purusha, or any form of symbol, which you see during the practices of Kundalini Yoga is known

as manifestation and that takes place in the forward flow through the nadis.

Then, in the practice of Kundalini Yoga, you have to remember one important thing, that not one part of Kundalini Yoga is risky. You can be sure about it. Not even the slightest in Ajna chakra, because it is a very powerful center, the awakening can be brought about very fast, very quickly and therefore, in Ajna chakra, there is not much of a risk, but still the awakening can take place very quickly. However, those people who give a word of caution in the awakening of kundalini, they should know that if there is anything that is least risky in this world it is the practice of Kundalini Yoga.

When you want to take to the practices of Kundalini Yoga you must first of all try all the centers. Practice concentration on Muladhara for some time, then go on to Swadhisthana, then Manipura, then Anahata, then Vishuddhi, then Ajna, then Bindu. If you practice concentration on these centers a week or 15 days each, then you will learn the state of your evolution. Some of you will find the center of Anahata to be the easiest. That may be your center. Others will find that Ajna chakra or the center behind the mid eyebrow to be very powerful and intimate with your evolution. Therefore, in the practices of Kundalini Yoga an aspirant has to practice concentration on all the chakras and ultimately he has to decide one for himself. Once you discover the right chakra for yourself, then the awakening is easy.

In short, the practice of Kundalini Yoga is intimately connected with the manifestation or with the awakening of the higher senses that are lying dormant in the human being.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Q. What are some of the other means of awakening the Kundalini?

Swamiji: For the awakening of kundalini, you can use the yantras, you can use the mandalas, concerning a particular chakra, and you can also use the bija mantras, as well as concentration on the particular *tattwa*, the element of that chakra, whether it is fire or ether, or air.

Q. What if you concentrate on the wrong center?

Swamiji: There is no wrong center. We are trying to find out the state of our evolution. If you concentrate on Muladhara and if you are stationed in Manipura, you will not get any wrong reactions from Muladhara, you will only find that you are not getting much of an experience from Muladhara.

Q. What is the meaning of the word kundalini?

Swamiji: Some people say that the word kundalini means coiled, but actually the word kundalini means a deeper place, a ditch. If you dig a pit here, that is called *kunda*. It is said that in the brain there is a small pit where the central powers are lying dormant and that is to be tackled.

Q. What are some of the practices that awaken Muladhara?

Swamiji: There are many practices that awaken Muladhara. Vajrasana and Vajroli awaken Muladhara. Mulabandha and Tadan Kriya awaken Muladhara. Ashwini mudra, the contraction and expansion of the anus awakens Muladhara.

Q. Could you give an individual explanation of each of the six chakras and where they are located?

Swamiji: According to tradition and evolution, the first is Muladhara, *mul* means the root and *adhara* means the basis. Muladhara is situated at the perineum in the masculine body and in the feminine body it is located at the root of the uterus at the posterior side.

Swadhisthana is at the root of the spinal cord, where the spinal cord ends and the tail bone begins. Swadhisthana means place, so it means one's own place.

The third in the order is Manipura. *Mani* means jewel and *pura* means city, hence the city of jewels. That is the meaning of Manipura. This Manipura is situated behind the navel, on the inner side of the spinal cord.

Anahata means unbeaten, or un-struck. The Anahata is situated behind the sternum on the inner side of the spinal column.

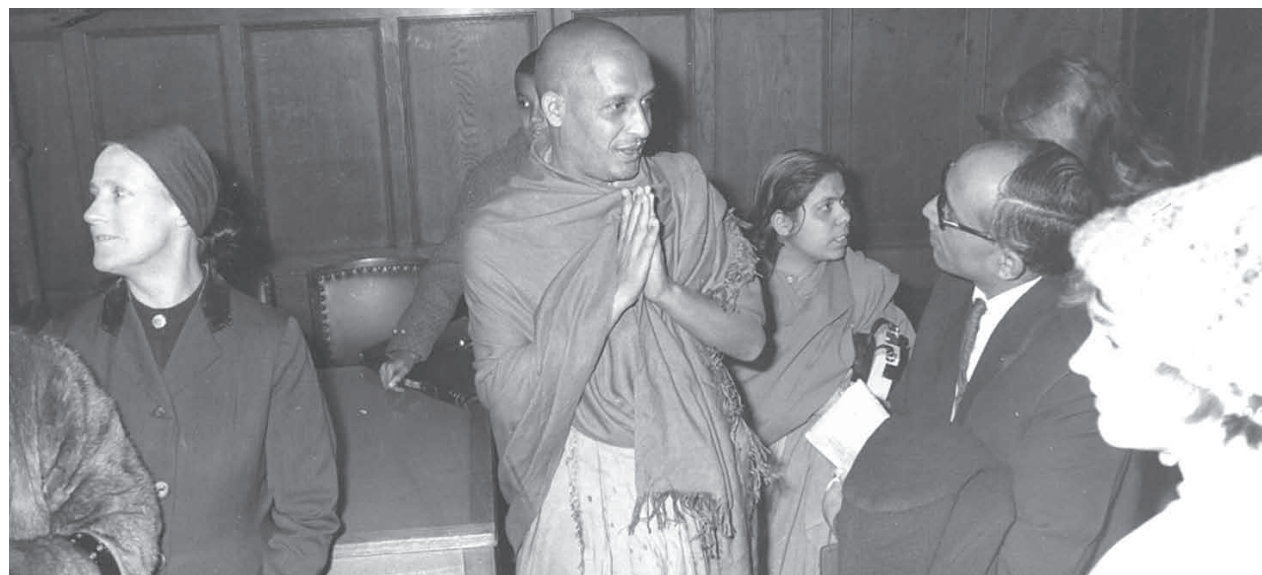
Vishuddhi is called the center of purification, where the poison or anything is purified. It is located at the junction at the back of the neck, at the cervical plexus.

The next is Ajna chakra. Ajna means command. It is the seat of the astral command, where you can hear the inner voice. It is behind the eyebrow center on the top of the spine where the spinal cord terminates in the brain, at the pineal gland.

Bindu is exactly the point where the Hindu Brahmins keep the tuft of hair. It is the cranial point that controls the whole optic system. Bindu means drop.

Sahasrara is of course the famous pituitary gland which controls each and every gland and each and every system of the body. It is located at the crown of the head.

Hari Om Tat Sat



Mantra Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

The Hindu Center,

London, England 7, 1971

All throughout the world there is a great awakening. That awakening is a spiritual awakening and this awakening has come to mankind after six thousand years. During these six thousand years, mankind has been sleeping spiritually. The history of this period is one of utter spiritual darkness, where he was totally cut off from his spiritual home and from his spiritual roots. He may have believed in God, but the belief in God is certainly not spiritual life. Belief in God may be a part of religion or it may be a part of your normal conditioning, but it is not spiritual life. At the same time you may not believe in God but you may be spiritual. When man feels that the highest aim in his life is to realize the whole and the highest consciousness in him then he becomes a spiritual seeker. It is in this sense that yoga has come to remind mankind of its spiritual roots.

Yoga should not be thought of as separate entities like asana and pranayama. Asanas and pranayama are part of yoga, but they are not the heart of yoga. In the same way bhakti, and the practice of mantra and many other things should not be considered to be the whole of yoga. They are parts of yoga.

Out of all the systems of yoga, there is one particular system which is very important for the awakening of the spiritual consciousness of man, the spiritual

consciousness which lies hidden behind the physical frame. It may be awakened by many other systems of yoga but there is one very powerful and simple system for awakening the spiritual consciousness in man by which he can realize the greater dimensions of his being. This system is called Mantra Yoga, or the system of mantra.

Of course, people have thought that mantras are names of God or of a particular God. Please excuse me, and let me depart from this view. A mantra is not what you see; it is a secret part of man, hidden in the inner recesses of man's personality. These mantras are actually sounds and these sounds have to do with the tattwas, the elements, the structure, the velocity,



belonging to his psychic personality. By the practice or recitation of a particular mantra you can awaken in yourself the hidden and the secret spiritual awareness. Each and every sound which you produce has a psychic pattern which can be realized in deeper meditation and every sound does affect some particular part of your being.

It is said in Kundalini Yoga and other forms of yoga, that by practice of mantra, the deepest *lokas*, or the deepest planes can be reached. This means that we are then able to contact the different planes of consciousness. This is one plane of consciousness; it is called Bhu loka, one of your planes of consciousness. Then there is another plane of consciousness where there is a subtler type of consciousness, and according to the great rishis, there are seven planes of higher consciousness and seven planes of lower consciousness. The higher planes of consciousness are divided into Bhu loka, that is earth consciousness, this consciousness, the sensual mind, Bhuvah loka, the intermediate subtle plane, Svah loka, the higher plane of consciousness. These are the three important planes which are as a whole subdivided into seven planes, and these higher planes of consciousness are in us and we need to study them just as we study in physics, what matter is.

Matter is everything. That is to say, it is in the form which we can see, and it is also in the form of energy. In the same way you can view this plane where you are conscious at that moment. But this is not the only plane of consciousness. The rishis and the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Shastras, the great scriptures, have repeatedly said that this plane of consciousness to which you have arrived to date, is just a very small area of consciousness, and it is subject to expansion

and it is not complete. This is the plane of the body, this is the plane of the senses and this is the plane of the mind. This is called Bhu loka or the sensory plane of consciousness and this is called *samsara*, this is called the world. As we say, the man is completely separate; he is completely separate from the world. From this consciousness to which we are attached, to which we are bound, is there a way to come out of our bondage, and a way to leave this plane of consciousness and reach a more satisfying and complete plane of existence? It is in this respect that yoga says that through the practice of mantra you can contact the different planes of your existence.

The mantra is to be practiced by the aspirant with bhakti, with concentration and with faith so that he becomes one with the mantra. His conscious mind loses its identity in the mantra, and becomes the mantra. When the mind loses its identity, becomes one with the mantra, then the mantra awakens in you the higher existence, a different plane is felt. This is the purpose of Mantra Yoga.

In India, the Brahmins and the people belonging to other ways of life do practice mantra, and also in the west many have taken to the practice of mantra. Especially the mantras Om Ram and Om Namah Shivaya have become very popular. The mantra Gayatri, which is a part of the Vedas, is a very important and very powerful mantra. Among these mantras there are those that belong to the Tantric system, because they are related to Shakti, to Saraswati, to Lakshmi, to Durga, to Kali. For example, AIM for Saraswati, HRIM for Lakshmi, KLIM for Kali, DUM for Durga. These are very powerful bija mantras which should be recited during one's daily spiritual practice.

Each mantra which is repeated has an immediate influence on human consciousness. As a result, a mantra awakens a certain power of consciousness, so that the individual begins to view the problems of his life from a different angle. You may have experienced in your life that during moments of difficulty and confusion, when your mind is flooded with the problems and confusion in your life, if you take to that mantra, the mantra will definitely help you by helping you to transcend the consciousness at the gross plane to the subtle plane. When your consciousness transcends the gross plane and arrives at the subtle plane then it is able to contact the individuality, the subtler self, and it can give you a clue for solving the problem, for solving that confusion, and if you follow that guidance it will help.

Mantra helps you on the spiritual quest by transferring your ordinary consciousness to the unlimited dimensions. In the practice of mantra, there should be regular practice in the morning and also at night. When you practice mantra in the beginning you practice either on the mala, either the tulsi mala, made out of tulsi, or rudraksha, made out of rudraksha seeds, or a sandalwood mala, or a crystal mala. According to the views of the Mantra Shastra, there are very strict rules for the performance of mantra japa and the use of different kinds of malas. You may want to consult the book on *Japa Yoga* by Swami Sivananda, and there are other books on Tantra or Mantra Yoga by other great yogis. There you will find a lot of information concerning the different mantras and malas which you use for the practices of these mantras. But, at the same time, there is also a practice suggested in the Shastras, called Anusthan.

Anusthan means the constant practice of one particular mantra for a particular number of times. For instance, Namah Shivaya, is a mantra comprised of five syllables. According to one view this mantra is to be repeated 50,000 times. It is not very much. It takes less than fifty days, and it does not involve many restrictions. You must eat only vegetables and fruits which is a very good diet; it is a very good purification of the body. It is a very good practice for people suffering from nervous disorders. If you are suffering from nervous breakdown, if you are using tranquilizers, you may be right for the practice of anushthan.

Of course, if you are a sincere spiritual aspirant, if you want to enter into the realms of higher consciousness, then this is also a good method. If the mantra has to be practiced 50,000 times and each mala consists of 100 beads, then 100 malas have to be done every day for 50 days and during the practice of anushthan you should stick to doing 100 malas every day regularly until the whole practice is completed. During this period of anushthan you must take care of a few things. First is diet, second you must be sincere, third your associations, fourth, your sexual habits, maybe even in the family. If you take care of all these things, this mantra system of anushthan will help you materially, mentally and also spiritually.

Then there are other mantras, such as Om, or mantras of Devi, so called bija mantras. Bija mantras are very powerful as you may be aware of. In the books of Sir John Woodroffe, Swami Sivananda and many others, the mantras like Klim, Shrim, etc. are called bija mantras. Actually they are seed mantras. They influence the whole of your spiritual and psychic system. There are also ways of practicing these bija mantras. You have

the psychic centers in your body as you may know and if you do not I will mention them briefly.

At the bottom is the Muladhara center in the perineum. At the root of the spinal cord is Swadhisthana. Behind the navel is Manipura, the navel center. Behind the heart is Anahata, the heart center. Behind the throat, at the neck is Vishuddhi, and at the top of the spinal cord is Ajna, the center of higher command. At the top of the head at the back is Bindu, where the Hindu Brahmins used to have a shikha, a strand of hair; and in the region of the pituitary gland, on the crown, there is Sahasrara. These are the chakras, and these are the psychic centers. These psychic centers are dormant in man.

There are other centers also in the lower body below Muladhara up to the ankles, the toes, etc. There are seven more chakras, or seven lower planes of consciousness, and we are not concerned with these lower chakras. We are only concerned with those levels of consciousness from Muladhara up to Sahasrara. Sahasrara is the Sapta loka. As you may have heard often we chant :

Om Bhū, Om Bhuvah, Om Suvaha, Om Mahah, Om Janah, Om Tapah, Om Satyam,
and then the Gayatri mantra,
Tat Savitur varenyam,
Bhargo devasya dhimahi,
Dhyo yo na prachodayat.

They are called the Sapta vyahriti, that is to say they are the seven planes of consciousness and these levels of consciousness should be equated with these chakras.

Muladhara chakra is the highest chakra of the lower planes and it is the lowest chakra of the higher planes.

In each chakra, the spiritual and psychic powers are dormant. You can awaken that power by manipulating the chakra, by concentrating on that particular center, without any danger and without any risk. I know that in the awakening of chakras there is no risk. There is no spiritual risk, no physical risk and no mental risk. There is greater risk in ganja, there is greater risk in L. S. D. , there is greater risk in bhang, there is greater risk in cigarettes, and there is greater risk in our civilization. But there is no risk in Kundalini Yoga. Of course you must be prepared to embark on an adventure.

Now, the centers can be awakened by mantra, by any mantra. If your mantra is Om Namah Shivaya, you can practice the mantra in Muladhara in the first week, in the second week in Swadhisthana, in the third week in Manipura, in the fourth week in Anahata in the fifth week in Vishuddhi and then onwards between the eyebrows and then Bindu and Sahasrara. This method of practicing the mantra is very powerful. It can result in putting you in touch with your higher consciousness, that is to say, the *Deva loka*, the plane of God, the plane of higher existence.

It is said in the Bhakti Shastras, by the different saints, and also in the books of the Tantra Shastra, that each and every mantra is not just a combination of syllables, it is not a combination of A, B, C, D, that is parts of some language. For example, ka is a sound, it has nothing to do with a particular language. But the sound has got a length, the sound has a breadth, ka, kha, ga, gha, na and so on. If you read the book, *A Garland of Letters* you will come to know as to how each and every word, each and every sound has one of the elements out of the five elements. Now, each and every sound has a color, has a particular plane

of existence and each and every sound can be heard in four different states. When I am talking to you it is audible, it is called the gross plane of sound. There is also a transcendental plane of sound and we call that the cosmic sound. When we are able to hear a sound it is being reproduced. When we are not able to hear a sound it is not being reproduced, that is called the divine sound, the subliminal sound, and you call it the voice of the soul.

By practicing the mantra for a long time you can listen to the mantra, you can hear the mantra during the whole night. It is this spontaneous awareness of mantra for example, a particular mantra like Om Namah Shivaya, which becomes a part of your subconscious mind. Even as you breathe spontaneously, even as you move spontaneously, even as thoughts develop in the deeper planes of your mind, in the same way the mantra also goes on. Now most of the time we are breathing but we are not aware that we are breathing. We are practicing unconscious breathing. In the same way we are not conscious of the mantra. My mantra is Om. But I am aware of this mantra only when I use my mala. Is it not possible that I can become aware of this mantra, not on the conscious plane, but on the subconscious plane? My subterranean personality is completely filled up, is charged with the mantra. Externally, I may be talking to you on the subject of the Vedas, or on any other topic, but in the innermost part of my personality I will be practicing the mantra. Therefore, in Mantra Yoga there comes the aspect of ajapa japa.

In ajapa japa you practice the mantra with the breath. Normal breath, natural breath and this can be done at anytime, not only in the morning or at night, but whenever you remember, you concentrate, or you

become aware of your own breath. When you become aware of your own breath then you add your own mantra. Om, Om, for about 15 minutes, then do your daily work, whatever you do. Whenever you find a little time, withdraw yourself and concentrate on the breath, and when you become aware of the breath, add your mantra with the normal breath. Please remember, the breath has to be natural, effortless, and normal. You are not breathing but you are witnessing the breath. You should not make any effort of breathing. The breath should be natural according to your spontaneous rate of breathing. Your duty is to witness the process of breathing. You can do it even now while listening to me. A part of your awareness can be listening to my speech but you can also be aware of the breath. It is not at all necessary that in this practice of Mantra Yoga, in this practice of ajapa japa you should withdraw your mind. You can look after your job, you can also look after your duties, you can be listening to other people, but at the same time a part of your mind should be withdrawn, and should concentrate on the breath.

How should you breathe? In one hour we breathe about 900 rounds, 900 inhalations and 900 exhalations. In twenty four hours it is about 21,600 inhalations and 21,600 exhalations. Now these 21,600 rounds of breath have been wasted. Maybe thousands of people do not even realize that they breathe. Now, these 21,600 breaths are actually part of your consciousness, it is a part of your mind, it is a vehicle of your consciousness and it is your consciousness. If you concentrate on the breath you concentrate on your own mind. Listen carefully, when you concentrate on your breath you concentrate on your own mind. If you concentrate on your breath you concentrate on your own mantra and if you

concentrate on your own mantra while concentrated on your own breath you are concentrating on your own consciousness. Whenever you concentrate on the breath you are becoming aware of your mind in greater detail. So you should never lose this opportunity. If not 21,600 rounds of breath consciousness there should be sometime in the morning and some time in the evening when you should know that you are breathing. This practice of ajapa japa is so absorbing and so perfect that it constitutes a yoga on its own.

With your eyes open or closed, fix on one point either inside or outside, become aware of your own breath, and just say in your mind, "I am breathing in and I am breathing out". You feel your own breath. It is said by guru Goraknath, if you concentrate on a fixed point while concentrating on the breath then the transcendental sound will become known to you. So 21,600 times may not be possible now, but you can definitely set apart some time in the morning, and in any asana, padmasana, or siddhasana or swastikasana or sukhasana, in any particular asana with your spinal cord upright and straight, you relax, keep your eyes open or closed, and you should fix your attention on the wall, or on a picture of your deity, and then close your eyes, that is the first point. Concentrating on the whole body is stage number two. It should be done in every practice, not only ajapa japa but also in Japa Yoga, also in Kundalini Yoga, also in Kriya Yoga or in any meditation practice. The thing you should do is concentrate on the physical body with eyes closed. It means that you should see the body. It means visualizing the body. It means experiencing the whole physical body and not just a particular part, but a homogeneous awareness of the whole body. Practice this awareness of the whole

body for sometime and then after no part of your body makes any more movements, even if you only sit for five minutes, but you should have complete control over the fluctuations of the body.

The unconscious movements, such as scratching during meditation, or during puja, such as touching your face without being aware of it, these unconscious movements have their basis in the unconscious seeds in human life and they must be controlled. You must be sure that you are not making any movement at all. Then after that, concentrate on the breath, which is the third stage. You must be careful not to breathe deeper than your natural breath. When you have established yourself in the natural breath you should feel that, "I am breathing in and I am breathing out". I am aware of each and every breath. If I breathe six times, I am aware of every one of the six breaths. If I breathe seven times, I am aware of all seven breaths. You should proceed in this way. Then fix your mantra according to your resolve, according to your sankalpa, then you practice that mantra 50 times, 5000 times, 15,000 times, whatever number you have decided for yourself. At the end of ajapa japa, stop the mantra and concentrate on your own place. It may be a chakra, it may be a light, it may be the form of your guru, it may be the form of your Ishtha Devata, but try it at the end not at the beginning. This is the practice of ajapa japa which will change the patterns of your subconscious mind. It will interfere with your karma. It will also eliminate the samskaras, and bring peace of mind; and this is the highest form of mantra, it is the highest form of Japa Yoga.

Well in short, I could not say a lot about yoga to you, because there are many systems in yoga, such as ajapa japa, and Kriya Yoga, etc. but all these things cannot be

discussed at the moment. However, in short, I can tell you that yoga is for everyone.

If you are suffering physically or mentally you definitely need yoga. If you are not suffering physically or mentally and you are a spiritual seeker, still you need yoga. Religion without yoga is incomplete. Similarly, life without yoga is incomplete. Swamis and Sannyasins who do not practice yoga are always sick, ill, constipated, and all kinds of problems are in their bodies. They are not at all able to help the suffering mankind. In the same way I have seen in the east and in the west, that the practice of yoga has brought a lot of new ideas to the people. I have been to Belgium, last year and the year before last, and when I returned many of them said they had received a new lease on life, becoming free of diabetes, stress and many other problems as a result of the practice of yoga. I taught them Shankhaprakshalana and thereafter each and every one of them thanked me because they became free of the many physical disorders they had been cursed with.

In India I also teach yoga to sadhus and not only to householders because they have to lead very disciplined life which allows them only short periods of sleep at night since they have to get up at 3 o'clock and begin their spiritual practices and their karma yoga, etc. Asanas, pranayamas and meditation must be done to remain fit for such rigorous discipline because it makes you free from tensions, physical, mental, and emotional and it is on account of tensions that you need to sleep more. Even if you only sleep three to four hours it is more than enough. Yoga can help you a great deal in this way.

Hari Om Tat Sat

The second series of six lectures was given in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and was organized by the Belfast Yoga Center, then under the direction of Swami Atmananda Saraswati, who agreed to Rishi Vasishtha's suggestion that we would so choose topics for his lectures on this tour which would allow him to give self-contained and complete coverage of some important aspect of Yoga or Tantra. The subject matter chosen in Belfast was Light on Yoga, which would cover all the major forms of Yoga. The Copenhagen Ashram under the direction of Swami Janakananda Saraswati chose the subject of Mantra, Yantra and Mandala, and the lectures given there appear in the third series given below. The Vienna Satyananda Ashram under the joint direction of Rishis Arundhati and Vasishtha, chose the subject of the Chakras and their respective sadhanas for awakening will be presented in the fifth series of lectures and meditations further on.

Concerning the Light on Yoga Series, the fact that Sri Swamiji presented these six lectures in a single seminar allowed him to develop a beautiful garland of presentations of seven major forms of yoga thus giving an integrated view of the essentials of Kriya Yoga, Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga and Hatha Yoga, and finally Kundalini Yoga, all the while stressing the need for an integrated practice of all these yogas to ensure a well balanced and fully developed sadhana. As will be obvious from this and the previously published volume, he has spoken about these forms of yoga before in many places, but it is in this seminar that he is weaving a combined picture of these forms of yoga, emphasizing their interrelation and complementarity. He stressed the fact that although initially yoga is chosen according to temperament, complete spiritual evolution requires some sort of integration of all forms of yoga.

Kriya Yoga: Higher Yoga Practice

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

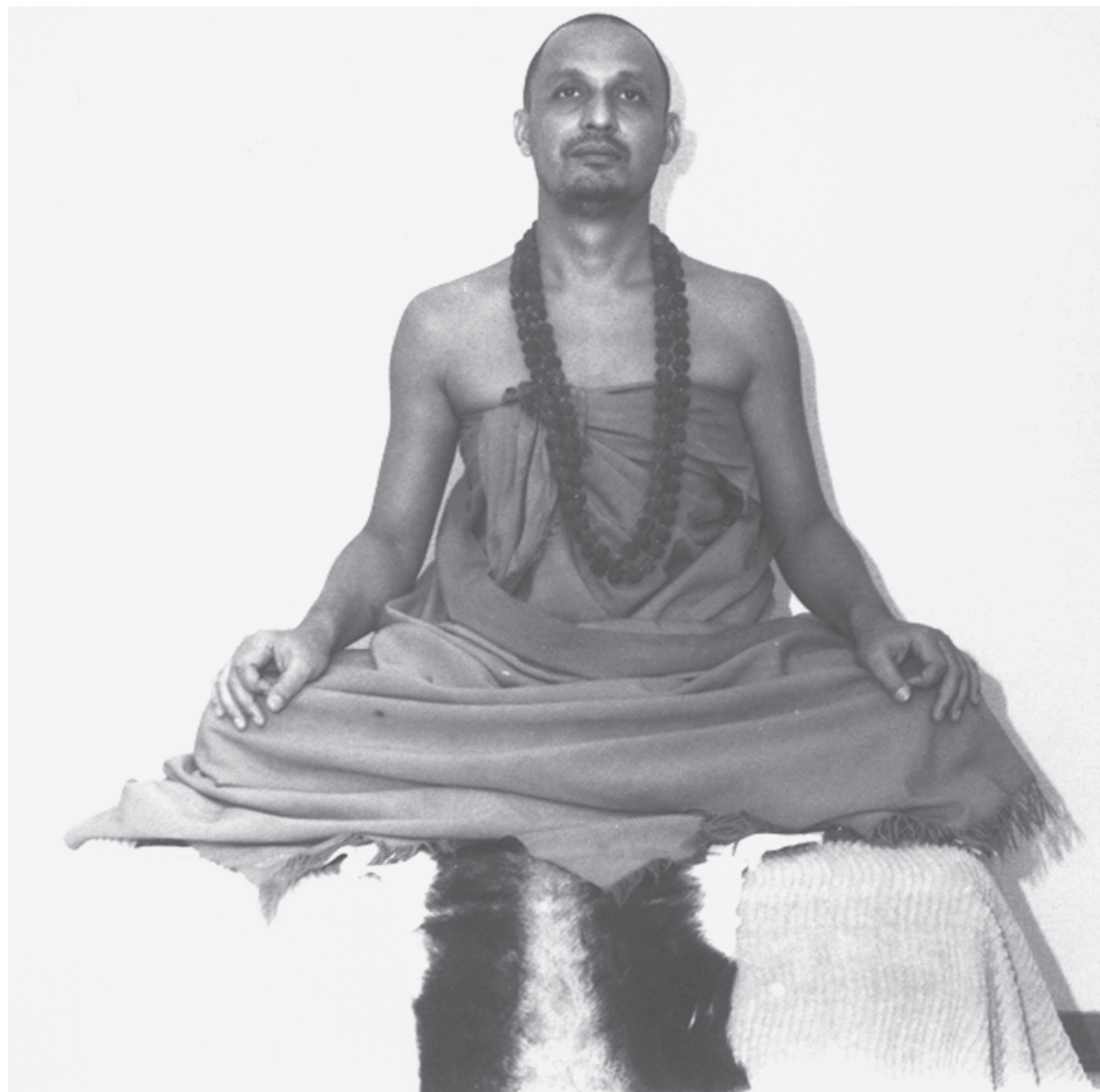
Belfast, Northern Ireland, March 8, 1971

Blessed spiritual seekers,

I am here with you after about six months. When we met the last time before this yoga ashram was created I made a promise that if Belfast has a permanent yoga center I would visit it again and again. I was very happy to see the activities of the yoga ashram and the people I met here. The vibrations, the atmosphere is excellent.

In spiritual life people have certain awareness and in fact the human being and each and everyone are living at the same time on many planes of existence. We are only aware of the gross plane, but you exist on other planes of consciousness also. To become aware of these greater and higher phases of your consciousness and existence is the ultimate purpose of yoga. As long as we remain engrossed on this material plane and we are not aware of the higher forces and higher existences, we are unhappy, grief stricken and full of problems and confusions. Once we become aware of the greater forces in us we are at once happy, full of bliss.

It is in this context that we take the message of yoga from home to home. It is not in order to preach a cult that we talk about it. In the practices of yoga



as you will know at this time there is one method which is known as meditation and is also known as Dhyana Yoga. When your personal consciousness becomes free from the external associations and tries to commune with your inner self, then you are practicing meditation or Dhyana Yoga. In this practice of meditation you are supposed to concentrate, to consolidate the tendencies of your mind at one center or one point. The individual consciousness keeps on moving from point to point and from object to object. If you carefully observe yourself you will find that mind is full of diverse awareness, and it is not possible for the mind to maintain the awareness of one object for a period of time. If you try to think about a rose and decide that you will only think about a rose for about five minutes, it will not be possible for you. You will be thinking about the rose but at the same time there will be other thoughts that will be interfering with the process.

One train of thought, or continuity of thought is intervened, is intercepted, which is known as distraction. This is one of the weaknesses, or one of the drawbacks, or limitation of the human mind. If you can cure this particular state of mind then the mind becomes very powerful. You know very well, that if the rays of the sun are concentrated or focused through a magnifying glass they become so powerful that they can burn any object. When the mind is brought to one point it becomes very powerful, but it is not possible because there are patterns of awareness in human consciousness.

These patterns of awareness in human consciousness are embedded in the subconscious, unconscious and also other planes. The consciousness of man is full of experiences, as well as, forms of knowledge. You know

of the rose as a flower, but it is not only the rose that you know. Your consciousness contains an infinite number of specific forms of knowledge and awareness pertaining to the experiences of this life, and the awareness is spontaneous. When you think about the rose the thought about your friend or about your business or about other affairs will spontaneously come on the upper phases of your mind. So this interception or intervention is a hindrance in the process of one-pointed awareness. In the practice of yoga we try to maintain continuity of consciousness and when you maintain continuity of consciousness then the subconscious forces rise up. The inner part of your personality which is hidden, which includes complexes, inhibitions, great and powerful faculties, they all express themselves; and this is the secret of yoga.

When your mind is completely distracted then the inhibitions, and complexes and psychological patterns can not be realized and cannot be expressed. When the mind is distracted it is not possible for any individual to express the inner faculties because at the moment of distraction you are completely cut off from the inner resources. When the mind becomes one-pointed and one thought continues or awareness of one object continues for about a minute or two without intervention then the subconscious forces come to the forefront and this is one of the forms of realization.

This concentration of mind is the main subject matter in yoga. It is also seen in scientific investigations that during the moment of concentration when all the thoughts are consolidated and one thought continues, the waves in the brain indicate introversion, and the oscillations become completely different. It is of course

a very technical subject for me to explain here at the moment and it is not necessary for me to go into these technical details, but the scientists who have conducted these experiments have found that the mind behaves differently and shows different mental charts under different conditions.

Mind when distracted and disturbed, has a different wave length and a different picture altogether in an encephalogram. Mind being fixed on one point, thinking only about one thing, has presented a different picture. The intermediate level, the depressed level, and the higher level are the three levels of human consciousness. The pictures that have been received show different things during different states of consciousness. It has also been seen that when you are able to control all your thoughts and you are able to attain a state of thoughtlessness, when not one thought exists in the mind you are not only controlling your thought but your consciousness is free from any process of thinking. In yoga this is supposed to be a very powerful condition of the mind and it is called a state of samadhi. It is difficult to attain, and by practicing it I have seen that it is very difficult. For many people, when they go in to concentrate the mind they find that visions and many other inner experiences are floating across.

So, in yoga there is also another method, and the method is, do not try to concentrate the mind. Do not make any effort to bring the mind to one-pointed concentration, leave it free. But at the same time do some kind of internal action, not external, but internal action. This particular system of yoga is known as Kriya Yoga.

Therefore, we come to understand that in yoga there are two clear ways, two clear sections. One section will tell you how to control the mind and how

to make it one-pointed. But the other section will tell you if on account of your personal evolution you find this difficult, you can also accomplish the same thing by some other way, and this is the practice of Kriya Yoga about which I am going to say a few words.

Kriya Yoga is for all people.

The practice of Kriya Yoga is a very ancient practice. It does not belong to any religion but as far as I know, saints and sages who were founders or inspirers of different religions did practice Kriya Yoga. The practices of Kriya Yoga can be found in every scripture, not clearly but in a symbolic language. In India we consider that the practice of Kriya Yoga is for all those people whose minds are full of tensions, disturbances, confusions and who find it difficult to concentrate the mind and to make it one-pointed. Then, in this practice of Kriya Yoga it is believed that you should not try to control the mind, you should not try to make it one-pointed.

During the whole period of practice of Kriya Yoga you keep the mind completely free. Even as one takes drugs and the drugs bring about a certain influence or chemical reaction in the body and you feel a kind of intoxication, the psychic patterns change, behavior also changes, drives in life also change. Although you have done nothing except take a drug, and that drug has done its job on your nervous system through the respiratory system or through other systems.

In Kriya Yoga, through internal and external pranayama, the nervous system, the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems are purified. The prana or the vital force, or the intrinsic personal energy of man is awakened. The prana or the pranic

force is in everyone, you do not get it from outside. You do not have to import it from outside through any external agency. They call this vital energy *Shakti* and we call it prana, the bio-energy, the dynamic energy in man, and it is in everyone but it is dormant. It is lying in absolute dormancy and therefore, through the practice of internal and external pranayama, or through internal and external actions, *kriyas*, we are trying to awaken this all pervading energy in man. You may be aware of one fact and that is that man does not only exist in time and space. A part of his being exists in time and space, but there are forms of man, there are forms of every individual including me and you which exist beyond time and space. This man that I am and this body that you are is matter, but this is not the only thing you can think about yourself. You will have to understand this matter on a scientific basis.

You cannot say that this body which I am, is only this much, and that there is no higher form of existence. Matter is not only matter which is subjected to time and space. Matter that is limited to time and space is one aspect of life, it is one aspect of existence, and is one aspect of this matter. Energy is the ultimate form of matter. It is not only in the mineral kingdom, it does not only concern uranium, etc. Even this body, the ultimate form, the ultimate basis, the ultimate substratum, or the true form of this body is energy, and this energy is called Shakti. This Shakti manifests in this body in many ways. Energy in the form of prana, the vitality, energy in the form of thought, energy in the form of awareness, energy in the form of existence, and maybe there are higher forms of energy of which we have not become aware.

In the practice of Kriya Yoga we try to become aware of or awaken the greater part of ourselves, the powerful parts of ourselves, and the infinite part of ourselves. So in the practice of Kriya Yoga we do not at all interfere with the vagaries of the mind, with the personal limitations. We allow the mind to play its own role and we keep practicing the internal and external things. By and by we choose to withdraw the mind by spontaneous means. In this body there are forces which can cause the experience of bliss, which can awaken intuition, which can bring about a state of samadhi, or sublime equanimity, or a state of transcendental consciousness, or a state of higher consciousness or a state of self realization or a state where you are aware of the greater part of your life, or the higher part of your being.

For that you do not have to work intellectually, but it is possible that without doing much about it you can have the experience of your self. In the practices of Kriya Yoga you are actually not aware of all these things that I am talking about on the intellectual plane. You keep practicing and at the end of the kriyas, by the end of the practice, your mind is quiet. Even if you try to think at that moment, and even if you try to cause disturbance to your mind, the mind is not disturbed. The practitioners of Kriya Yoga have complained many times that when they start the practices of Kriya Yoga they were told that up to a certain level, up to a certain practice they were not to close their eyes, to keep them open but they found it difficult.

In the practices of Kriya Yoga they were also asked to let the mind move in any direction but they found that it was very difficult. The mind becomes one-pointed without any effort. So this practice of Kriya

Yoga is a very important one for the people of our times, for our internal and external life, which is completely agitated and under a constant state of excitement. Even for a moment we are unable to bring our mind to a state of tranquility and peace; not only on the conscious plane, but even on the subconscious plane, in dream, in the deeper realms of mental awareness. Explosions, eruptions, volcanoes, earthquakes are taking place but we are not aware of them. Those who have studied modern psychology and also yoga know that this mind through which we think is not the only mind. It is only a part of the mind. The consciousness is as deep as the ocean and the ocean is very deep. The mental life of man exists in different planes of this ocean. We are only aware of the top of it, what we call the thoughts, reasoning, argument, etc.

What about the deeper planes of your mental life? How are you going to have control over that? Those of you who have gone through the manuals of modern psychology can understand how difficult it is to control the different states of mental existence. In our religious life we are to control the mind. Hindus, Christians, Muslims, Buddhist and Jains all say that you must control the mind. To control the mind means to control your external habits. But, do you know that by controlling your external habits you are not controlling the whole of your mind, the fluctuations, and the behavior patterns and many other things which are immediately connected with the deeper states of the mind? There is no way of controlling the deeper mental life and the greater mental life. It is through the practice of Kriya Yoga that you gain access to your deeper mental life and

then you are in a position to control the mental activities on subtler planes.

It is said that the practice of yoga does not only control the external thinking but it can control all those things that cause depression, schizophrenia, neurosis, and other psychological problems which are responsible for our faulty external behavior. It is as if an expert man goes deep into a well, deep into a trench or deep into the things from the depths. In the same way the yogi or the yoga practitioner, with the help of Kriya Yoga goes deeper into the depths of his life, and there he removes all that is to be eliminated and gains what he is to accomplish. The practice of Kriya Yoga has become very popular in the west. People are taking to it because they find that it gives them a great relief, mentally as well as physically. This time in Belfast we are having the first seminar on Kriya Yoga, but earlier we had them in France and in many other countries.

People in hundreds and thousands have participated in the practices of Kriya Yoga. It has been my experience also during the last twenty five or thirty years during which I have been teaching yoga asanas, pranayama and many other forms of yoga to people in different countries that many people have discontinued their practices. But those people to whom I taught Kriya Yoga they continue even to this day. Almost all of those who have been practicing Kriya Yoga they have one experience. They say that even if I do not want to control my mind, the mind is under my control. Even if my mind is assailed by great difficulties and problems, still I can maintain absolute calmness during the moments that the mind would have lost its hold on normal behavior. You will agree that it is

very important in this modern life that we must have control over the mind, otherwise, the unconscious and the automatic behavior of mind can compel you and me to commit suicide, to indulge in criminal life, in criminal actions, and it has been happening all over the world.

The mind is very important, and it is not only the external thinking mind, it is not only the mind through which you understand this talk now, but it is the greater part of your mind which is completely hidden from your perception. It is that part of your mind which you are not able to see. It is that infinite and vast range of your consciousness which is lying completely buried in the realms of the unconscious. It is that mind which is responsible for wars, for criminal acts, for suicides and of course quarrels in the family also, between husband and wife, and all kinds of frictions and conflicts.

It is this particular mind or this vast stretch of mind which you have to control and which you have to master. In yogic books it is written that the yoga practitioner must have control over the mind in all states of existence, conscious, subconscious and unconscious. Only then can he control his behavior, actions, and reactions. But when the mind is completely free, it acts and reacts like a vagabond because it has no controller and no regulator. It is in this life that we have to begin the practice of Kriya Yoga in order to know more about our mind and more than that to gain control over the greater part of our mind. This will contribute peace and amity in social, political and national life.

This was a brief introduction to Kriya Yoga.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Karma Yoga: Yoga in Everyday Life

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Belfast, Northern Ireland, March 9, 1971

I will be discussing Karma Yoga, the yoga which includes all activities of life including, the life itself. In doing this I should not miss referring to a great text which is known as *Bhagavad Gita*. In this small book, a clear exposition of Karma yoga has been imparted by Krishna to Arjuna.

The background of the story is: 5,000 years ago in India a great war took place between two families. At the time when the battle was about to begin one of the commanders of an army felt disappointed, frustrated and dejected. He started wondering as to why one should live, why one should work, why one should not renounce everything, if everything is to be destroyed in the end. Why should one perform karmas, the actions, if actions bind man to this lower existence? This kind of gloom and grief came to his mind. He wanted his charioteer to turn back; he was not prepared to fight the battle.

The charioteer was a great statesman of his time, Lord Krishna. Krishna revealed unto Arjuna, the commander, the secrets of life, and in the fifth chapter of the Gita, Krishna has made a direct exposition of the Science of Karma Yoga.

Hundreds and thousands of people all over the world, throughout the centuries were under the impression that not through action but through renunciation of the action one attains the highest consciousness, liberation, salvation or nirvana. People think that by actions one is creating more burdens, and one is trying to involve oneself in more incarnations and lives. As such if one has to become free from the cycle of karma he has to renounce action. But the Gita tells us that it is not at all necessary that one should

renounce karma for enlightenment. **No activity in life is anit-spiritual and anti-yogic.** It is not the karma itself which is horrible but it is one's own philosophy of karma. It is one's own attitude which is responsible for all of the agonies that arise out of a particular karma.

Karma means action. When you do certain actions through your mind and through your body it is known as karma. When the karma is done with a particular art so that the invariable concomitants of karma are not created then it becomes Karma Yoga.



If the karma is done with the ordinary outlook to life it is binding. It causes more and more bondage, creating impressions and deep rooted subconscious complexes because as you know every action that you do, whether mental or physical leaves some kind of aftereffect or residue in your mind, and that becomes a part of your personality. It influences your behavior; it influences your psychological apparatus. Your actions, your thinking and all your reactions are based on your past karmas. The attachment to the karma causes neurosis. As a result the man suffers mentally and on submental planes also.

For complete freedom on the mental, psychic and spiritual planes it is very important that you understand how the karma has to be performed. In fact, the path of Bhakti Yoga, the path of devotion in which you pray, gives you peace of mind, tranquillity and one-pointedness. The path of Raja Yoga in which you meditate also gives you peace of mind, one-pointedness and will power. The path of Jnana Yoga in which you analyze and rationalize gives you a clear concept about reality. But all these three paths are incomplete without performing the proper Karma Yoga.

Each and every action that you do in your life is karma and Karma Yoga at the same time. When karma is being done, when a particular action is done in life with attachment, with obsessions and selfishly and with conscious motive then it becomes karma. The same karma when done without any selfishness, without any obsession, with a clear consciousness, it becomes Karma Yoga.

If you grow a garden and it so happens that all the seedlings that were planted get frozen at night then you get frustrated. You become heart broken. It is not

only your plans but even your actions which completely failed so there are frustrations and as a result of the frustrations the whole psychological personality is affected. The result of that effect is that your behavior and reactions to your family, society and also with yourself is completely influenced. You know what happens; you know the after effects of frustrations. But the same result and the same tragedy can be faced by a man of wisdom. If once the plants are frozen and nothing comes out of it he makes another attempt, with complete wisdom and with complete understanding, he is not frustrated, his heart is not broken, he knows that he can get through this difficulty and once again he can come up in life.

The basis of Karma Yoga is a sense of internal and spiritual detachment. It is said, it is up to you and it is within your capacity, it is within your power to do karma, to act. But you have absolutely no control over the consequences, over the results. Each and every karma that you perform bears threefold results. Some karmas bring about positive results, others bring about negative results, that is to say the karmas do not bring any fruit at all. The positive fruits and negative fruits but most of the time they are mixed. Every karma in life bears mixed fruits, positive and negative at the same time. If you will try to see your own life you will agree with me.

The negative fruits have the greater bearing upon life. If I get or experience something nice in my life, it is true, I experience it and I enjoy it. But at the same time something tragic happens in my life that leaves a deeper scar. It is very difficult to get rid of it. If in one family a happy event and a tragedy take place at the same time it is the tragedy that is going to affect the mind, and not the happy event. You cannot say that in

my family somebody is dead and if at the same time a baby is born, then let us have a celebration. It is the human mind; it is the mind of man which is always more affected by the negative result.

The rishis or the sages felt that it is very important that one has to know that every karma in life, every relationship, every thought, every enterprise in life bears mixed results. In this life, whatever karma we have been doing is always bearing mixed fruits, those desired and those which we did not desire. Both at the same time simultaneously, sometimes together, sometimes one after the other and you can not eliminate this process. You cannot eliminate the possibility of this event, this has to happen.

Now what should be our attitude? It is said in the *Bhagavad Gita* that you have all the power to practise karma, to do a particular action whether it is gardening or a business or in a household or opening an ashram or anything for the matter of that but so far as the fruits are concerned it is not in your hands. Therefore, one should not involve oneself in the fruits of karma. One should not try to become a part of the fruits of karma. At least at that point he must try to detach himself from the incurring of fruits. If it is good it is all right. But if it is negative, you must know how to get over it and in this particular art of Karma Yoga you succeed; you can get rid of so many psychological and mental problems. Our actions, our behavior in life are mostly effected by the samskaras or the impressions or the aftereffects that were created by every karma.

Whenever you do a particular karma, a seed is produced in the mind. That seed is called an impression which is known in yoga as samskara. It is the sum total of the karma that we have done.

Now, for the time being I can give you an example. You are listening to this speech on Karma Yoga. We are all sitting here; we are doing karma, no doubt. Now, this karma is producing impressions and pictures in the deeper recesses of our mind and these impressions ultimately go to other parts of our personality where they remain in a dormant potential state. That is called the seed state, and that seed state or the dormant potential state is known as samskara in yoga. It is this samskara or that seed karma which again comes out or comes up and influences our behaviour, our temperament, our inclinations, ambitions and influences the whole life.

The way I behave, think and react is an outcome of the past karma. If I am angry or if I am happy, if I love you or if I hate you, if I like you or if I do not like you, if I like to do business or if I do not like to do business, or if I want to be spiritual or if I do not want to be spiritual it is all just spontaneous. It is an expression of the totality of the samskaras which you have accumulated in the past through karma. So every karma is an outcome of a previous karma. At the same time each karma gives birth to a seed which is again responsible for the next karma. This is the chain of karma and this chain of karma binds man. This chain of karma governs his mind, rules over his willpower and this is the chain of karma which is again responsible for our happiness and unhappiness, successes and failures, sufferings and of course enjoyments.

Now to get rid of this karma, which is invariably linked with thought waves, which exist in the form of thought waves, there must be some way and this way is Karma Yoga, the yoga of detached karma, or the yoga of disinterested karma or the yoga of unselfish action.

In the Gita it is mentioned, that if one is able to balance one's mind in pleasure and pain, in gain and

loss, in praises and criticism, such a man will never come to grief and agony. But it is not possible if he does not understand the secret of his relationship with the karma. The individual has to understand clearly his relationship with the karma and the relationship between the karma and the effect of karma on his mind or outside. It seems for us that karma is moving the physical body but if you try to go deep into the analysis you will understand that each and every karma is an expression of mind.

You desire to go to London. You desire to run a business or you desire to hate or love me. Now, you do it and you succeed or you fail. Whatever happens, the whole thing is a kind of manifestation. This is the gross manifestation. Karma is the gross manifestation of these subtle forces which are working within man. Before the karma is done on the physical plane, it is already accomplished on the mental plane. Kindly remember all these things; that whatever work you do in your daily life, this external exhibition of karma is already accomplished internally on the mental plane. It is said that before the samskara or the expression of the seed takes place, before the sprouting takes place there is already the expression of the seed within itself.

Therefore, the yoga practitioner has to remember one important thing. Along with their meditation, study of great books, association with the saints and sages and devotion to God and the higher being, they must seek to understand their relationship with the karma and must redefine that relationship. If you do not redefine your relationship with karma, karma is going to keep you in absolute bondage and shackles. You will never become free because even if you succeed for years and years together you cannot get rid of insecurities, it is impossible.

Take a business and do it for thirty years and become a multi-millionaire or billionaire, yet you will not be free from insecurities. Why? You have not redefined your relationship with karma and you are always worried and you are always anxious about what is going to happen because you do not know if your business fails whether you could build the business again. It is not only concerning your business but is also concerning your love for your wife and children or your commitments to your business or to the service to which you are attached that you are insecure about.

The karma which you do in your family and outside in the business does create a kind of error, I would not say sin, in the mind. Because the moment you become aware of the karma you become aware of the fruits, of the results, and there is not one man in life, there is not one man in this world who would ever say, Oh! I want negative fruits. I do not want positive results. If I am running a family then Oh! Everything should go to the dogs. No one will say it because by nature man wants everything in a particular way and that is the positive way. But according to karma, according to the laws of nature and according to the laws of the mind, the expression has to take place under the pressure of the will of man.

The will of man depends upon his previous karma. You may have a strong will or you may have a weak will and therefore, the spiritual minded people or the yoga minded people have to understand the secrets of Karma Yoga. Whenever an action is done, whenever a karma is performed it must be done with absolute interest and with absolute efficiency. You must be master of that skill but at the same time there must be balance of the mind and these are the two great definitions that have

been given in the Gita by Krishna to that commander in chief who refused to fight, who refused to work, who refused to take part in life.

- First: Efficiency in action is Karma Yoga. This is the first definition.
- Second: Balance of mind is Karma Yoga. This is the second definition which is not a separate but a complimentary or supplementary definition.

Efficiency in action coupled with the balance of mind is Karma Yoga

As far as the efficiency and the skill of Karma is concerned most of you know it, but as far as the balance of mind is concerned we have to learn. In order to maintain balance of mind we have to understand the nature of karma and the nature of the mind. That is why I said that we have to redefine our relationship with the karma that we are involved in.

A few years ago when I was working with my Guru, Swami Sivanandaji in Rishikesh, India, we had been working very much for the ashram. From a small little hut we made a very big ashram having buildings and offices and guestrooms in the jungle. The whole thing was unprotected. We were educated people, having good ideas. We used to bring typewriters, electric bulbs and good blankets. We used to find that every morning some bulbs were missing or someone had got into a room by breaking open the door and taken away the blankets. We used to tell Swamiji that this is happening. Swamiji said, "Either you make a permanent arrangement to protect these things, or failing in this, keep your mind free in such a way that it is not tainted. Otherwise, you will have bad dreams, you will lose your temper, and you will not have a good relationship with me or with your brothers in this ashram."

Well, it was not possible for me to understand what he was telling us. I was so worried about these things that I started suspecting people. Well, I was working with great skill. I was a very good worker at the ashram, physically, mentally and intellectually but this I could not understand and I started suspecting people. I am sure that I even suspected in a horrible way some of the swamis of the ashram. I thought that they were thieves that had become swamis and were taking away the bulbs, the blankets and typewriters. Otherwise, how could the culprit know that these rooms contained blankets? But my suspicions were not founded.

So you see how an event can get into a man's behavior and can change the pattern of his thinking, his assessments of personalities and completely put a veil before the eyes of wisdom, leading to wrong judgments. This happened to me to such an extent that I started to put inmates out of the ashram, punished a few servants, but today I know that I was wrong. Of course, when I realized the science of Karma Yoga, I saw that I was wrong because my judgments were not correct. Swamiji used to call me every time and he used to tell me, "If you have lost a few things it does not matter because if your mind is calm and peaceful you will be able to regain these things in a different way. Or if your mind is calm and peaceful you will be able to find a way for the protection of these things."

For years and years together I used to work with Swami Sivanandaji as a very nice worker and used to take care of many, many departments, typing hundreds of letters, books and manuscripts, carrying loads, running to the post office and the bank and so on, also working on my spiritual life, reading the Gita, Upanishads, the Bible, the Koran and many other

books. But I could not stop the samskaras being reared in the deeper realms of my personality. If at that time, I had the vision of a yogi, if I had seen inside myself, the deeper realms of my personality, I would have seen thousands and thousands of cobwebs.

The behaviour, the way of thinking, my attitudes to my seniors and my attitudes to my juniors was not correct. Ego, I had a terrible ego. I used to think, "how do I get rid of this ego?" It was not possible for me to adjust to anyone and it was also not possible for anyone to adjust to me even for a half-hour. I always saw faults in the people but I was not aware of the fact that it was because my relationship with the karma was not properly defined. It is true that on account of my good work the ashram prospered but at the same time the infection of karma spread to all of the people in the ashram and everybody became like myself. Attachment to karma, working day and night, like bulls and donkeys, or I should say like machines, around the clock, sometimes sleeping only for two hours, but on the higher spiritual plane I was accumulating karma and the karma was in turn influencing my personality.

So once, in 1947, Swamiji called me and told me a few things. He said, "you have to do karma no doubt, but try to become free from karma." I asked him how this would be possible if I have to type over twenty to thirty letter a day, when I have to count the money, when I have to meet your visitors, your disciples who have peculiar temperaments and range from the poorest to the multimillionaire. After all I must have some kind of ego and individuality.

He said, "No! It is not good because thereby you are blocking your spiritual progress but you are also remaining unhappy all throughout, because at night

and in the morning I see that your face is tense and your speech is full of excitement and you are not fully aware of what you are saying.” Then ultimately he gave me one clue. He said, “you must do all the karmas. Counting all the money, running a business, meeting the people and come out of it very quickly by repeating one idea in the mind, ‘I am the doer, it is my duty. As far as the results are concerned I do not care what comes. If positive results occur, I accept; if negative results occur, that I also accept’.”

In everyone’s life the sun does not shine all the time. There are moments when there is darkness. We must accept a philosophy which will help us in darkness and not in light. This is the difference between the materialistic philosophy of karma and the spiritual philosophy of Karma Yoga.

The materialistic philosophy of karma will tell you how to be happy when there is happiness and when there is sunshine. The spiritual philosophy of Karma Yoga will tell you how to be happy when it is absolutely dark, when you have been betrayed, you have experienced disloyalty. The very man for whom you sacrificed everything and whom you loved for years and years has just gone out leaving nothing for you. The very person for whom you sacrificed everything and did not leave any stone unturned to make him or her happy has absolutely no respect for you. You retire into seclusion and say, “My God, what can I do? There is no point to live like this! I will take a pill and get out of this life!”

Suicidal complexes take care of you. Or if you are not brave enough to commit suicide then you make a retirement or escape in different ways. I do not need to tell you about these, they are the psychological reactions that are well known to the western people.

This only happens if you do not understand the spiritual philosophy of Karma Yoga.

The karma should be done by each and every one and therefore in the Gita, ultimately Krishna said to Arjuna, the commander in chief who never wanted to face life, “Arjuna, please remember if you say that you want to renounce karma you can never renounce karma. Nobody can renounce karma.”

Once I met a few boys from the United States, who came to my ashram. I had a talk with them and they said, “we do not want to work!” I said, “why do you not want to work?” They said, “karma begets sins!” I said, “what do you mean by karma, taking a spade or a typewriter? Karma is done mentally on the mental or submental planes.” In the Gita it is said that you can never renounce karma even if you retire in the Himalayas. Even when you sleep you cannot renounce karma because karma is done on different planes, on the gross plane, or the subtle plane or on the submental plane, and it is continuous. Even thinking is karma, it is an action.

Coming to the end of this topic. Karma Yoga should be done with absolute awareness of the karma. It is my opinion now that whatever work that I am going to do and what I want to do, I know that I am going to do it and that out of this karma some results ensue which are either desired or not desired. If I am going to get the result which is desired I do not have to worry about it. But if anything happens against my desires what have I to do at that moment. If anything happens that I do not want, because after all I am a man and many things do occur that I do not want, at that time I say, “No! I have to keep my mind ready to face that situation.”

Therefore, each and every one of you must redefine your relationship with your life, with the events, with the actions and reactions, with the family members, with the things you possess, with the people you meet. With each and everything your relationship will have to be redefined, with your life in general and karma in particular. You will come across a vision, the vision is Karma Yoga.

Sometimes people think that going to the hospital and serving the sick is Karma Yoga. It is Karma Yoga but it is not the whole of Karma Yoga. It is the yoga of service to mankind and it is very good because it alleviates suffering. Some people think that going to an orphanage and giving voluntary services is Karma Yoga. It too is a very good thing and it is part of Karma Yoga but it is not the complete Karma Yoga. Karma Yoga can be practised not only in the orphanages or the asylum for lepers or by serving the blind people although these are very noble services. This you know and I accept it.

But to each and every action that you do to your husband and wife, children and friends, the attitude that you maintain to your position, or to the property which you have at the moment and many other desires which you have in your mind you should have a definite relationship, a wider relationship, a redefined relationship. That is opening the door to Karma Yoga. The day which you realize the vision of Karma Yoga the life which you are leading today will become a happy pilgrimage.

I am making the point very clear that Karma Yoga should not be restricted to service to mankind itself. Karma Yoga must include not only service to mankind but it should also include the redefinition of your relationship with yourself.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Jnana Yoga: Yoga Philosophy

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Belfast, Northern Ireland, March 10, 1971

Our topic concerns evolution in yoga philosophy and yoga practice. You know that human beings by temperament are never the same. There are people who are of a dynamic temperament, others who are emotional, others who are psychic and yet some others who are rational. People belonging to different temperaments have to have a different way for the evolution of their consciousness. There are people for whom it is very difficult to follow the path of meditation or devotion or rationalization. They feel better with selfless service to humanity. They feel joy when they express themselves in karma (work), in Karma Yoga, because the Karma Yoga purifies the mind and removes dirt from the heart. Those people who are dynamic by temperament will feel better with Karma Yoga.

However you will find there are people who are emotional by temperament. They are usually those who are devoted to God and prefer to follow the path of Bhakti Yoga. They pray, they practice repetition of the name of God or they practice mantra. They devote a lot of time to thinking about God and remembering his name, his qualities and so on. They also follow the path of surrender. This is the path which they like because it suits their temperament. If you ask such

people to follow the path of meditation, they will say, "No we cannot." They do not even understand why meditation is necessary because it is not for their temperament.

Then there are people who are psychic by temperament. They prefer to follow the path of concentration, meditation, going deep into the deeper recesses of the personality and consciousness, the psychic consciousness, the astral consciousness, the mental and supra-mental. For these people who are psychic by temperament it may be very difficult to follow the path of Bhakti, much less Karma Yoga. If you ask them to follow the path of Karma Yoga they say, "No, we do not want to work. If we just practice a little bit of meditation our consciousness is expanded, our consciousness transcends the physical and the empirical barriers. We feel at once one with the cosmic consciousness, and we have great visions of reality, the colors; they are beyond eyes, which you cannot bring down through any kind of medium, the sounds that ears cannot hear."

These people are known as Raja yogis. They follow the path of Raja Yoga, or the path of higher mysticism, or the path of psychic sciences. These people do not at all care for that God who is immediately personal like a friend and father. They always think that inside me, there is one consciousness which is homogeneous. That is the dormant consciousness and this consciousness is one, the collective cosmic consciousness. It is not different in you and me. Physically, my body and your body are two bodies. My mind and your mind are two minds. But on this plane of consciousness and realization, I and you and everybody are realized as one. That is known as cosmic consciousness, some people

call it divine consciousness, others, the Buddhists call it nirvana. Some call it emancipation and salvation, it is known as samadhi, the attainment of the highest consciousness in man.

Yet there is another sect of people and temperament who say that karma is of no use, devotion to God is of no use, that there is no need for the meditation on the chakras, or Om, or the star, or a flower, none of this is of any use. I must search within myself through a process of self introspection, by a process of investigation, by a process of rationalization. I want to know through an intellectual process, by a logical process, by constantly thinking as to what is the reality. If you say God, I want to interpret what this God is. Does it mean a God somewhere? No impossible! Does it mean a God in me? How could it be, such an infinite power in me? No, impossible! Then, is God completely different from me as a kind of cosmic force, or much deeper than energy? I can not understand it. This is how they keep on thinking about one point and try to solve that point with the help of their own mind, not depending on any external aid such as Bhakti or Karma Yoga, or Raja Yoga, asanas or pranayama. This path is known as Jnana Yoga. *Jnana* means knowledge. This knowledge refers to the knowledge of the higher being, through a method which is not empirical but which is transcendental.

First of all, let me tell you, that there is empirical knowledge and transcendental knowledge both. Empirical knowledge is obtained through the source of books and teachers, and gurus and it is obtained with the help of the mind. The transcendental knowledge is an unfoldment of what is already in man, or what is already in me. Jnana Yoga refers to that process

of attainment of knowledge in which you follow the path of reflection and contemplation. Whereas in Karma Yoga there is a constant redefinition, in Bhakti Yoga it is constant ecstasy, love, surrender, in Raja Yoga it is meditation on one point, on the other hand, in Jnana Yoga it is contemplation on a subject, on a topic, on a series of thoughts.

It is not merely the subject of God or consciousness, but Jnana Yoga is the realization of the basic problem with yourself, without depending on any external agency. Whereas in Bhakti Yoga you have so many aids, you sing the Lord's name, get into ecstasy, singing the name with a rosary, go on pilgrimages, go to saints and sages, temples, chapels and churches, etc. In Raja Yoga you have to practice asanas, pranayama, and withdrawal of mind, concentration on some form or some symbol. In Karma Yoga you have to do something outside. In Jnana Yoga you just have to sit quietly and meditate just on a few things.

The first principle of Jnana Yoga is that the Supreme Being or the Supreme Consciousness is homogeneous, it is not finite, it is not broken into pieces, it is not subject to changes, it is one whole, and that is called infinite. It includes everything. This Supreme Being is of the nature of consciousness, and on this they meditate.



Secondly, the question arises, what is the Supreme Being? So they meditate on, "I and the supreme being are identical." Now the problem comes, how can I be identical with the Supreme Being, because the Supreme Being is without faults, is without sins, is without decay, and is without death and mortality, whereas I am subject to all these things? Now, this problem has to be worked out. This I, who is supposed to be identical with the Supreme Being, is not that I which refers to this body and this name. This I is the pure I which transcends all the physical barriers. This body is not I, because this body is subject to decay and death, disease, it is never the same all the time. This mind is also not I which is identical with the Supreme Being, because mind is also subject to changes. It is never constant, it fluctuates. The Supreme Being, consciousness, never fluctuates; it is always calm and quiet like a great and vast ocean. So mind cannot be this I.

What about the senses? The senses cannot be the I because the qualities of the senses and the qualities of the I, which is identical to the Supreme Being, do not tally with each other. Therefore, the qualities of the Supreme Being should be superimposed on this I. This I should have the same attributes which the supreme consciousness has. At the same time we see the difference between this I and the body, between this I and the mind, between this I and the senses and between this I and everything else that this existence means to me.

Thus I discover a complete difference. So I begin to say, "I am not the body, I am not the mind, I am not the prana, I am not the senses, I am not the intellect, I am not the subconscious, I am not the customs, I am not the habits, I am not the tradition, I am not

the birth, and I am not the death. Here, one is trying to separate this I from its so called associations. All these associations are super-impositions on the I in some way or another. This I, which is so infinite, this I which is so immortal, this I which is so great and pure, and which is not a part but is identical with Supreme Consciousness, has come to be associated with these friends that belong to the lower nature, which belong to the realm of prakriti.

Now, through the practice of Jnana Yoga we are trying to understand, completely and correctly, the difference between the I, which is the real I, and the I which is the adulterated and misunderstood I. If you ask me who I am I say that I am a man or a girl. Here the I is identified with the body of a man or a woman. If you ask me who I am, I always say I am an Indian, or you say I am Irish, or I am an American, indicating that this I is associated with the idea of nationality. To say that I am intelligent, that I am clever, indicates that the I is misunderstood as the mind, the intellect.

By the practice of Jnana Yoga the individual consciousness, which is also an I, is disassociated from these limiting adjuncts, from these limitations. It is then when it is considered as identical with Supreme Consciousness. Now this process of dis-identification and this process of fusing the I with the supreme I or with the cosmic I is the subject matter of Jnana Yoga. In Jnana Yoga it is said that even as an ignorant man who has gone insane, who forgot all about his name and culture, family and friends, roaming the streets without any knowledge about himself and others, in the same way, a man who was also an ignorant man, who has been groping in darkness, avidya or nescience, he does not know his real nature, he always thinks that

he is a man subject to decay, death and grief, sorrow, dejection, identifying himself with everything, suffering and enjoyment.

Through the practice of Jnana Yoga he will have to dis-identify himself from everything that is taking place in his life, and become a witness first. All that is happening to me, am I the enjoyer, or am I the sufferer, or am I the doer, or am I a witness to all this? The body performs its respective actions. The mind thinks because that is the inherent nature of the mind. The senses perform their respective activities. All the elements in the body, in the mind, in the intellect, in the psyche, in the subconscious mind, in the unconscious mind are doing their natural and inherent duty. But on account of my own fault, since I have identified myself with these elements, I consider myself as the doer although I am not the doer. I feel that I am the sufferer, I am not the sufferer. I feel that I am enjoying, I am not the enjoyer. In fact I should have been a witness of all that is happening.

This is known as the individual soul. This individual soul is known as Atman. We call it individual consciousness but also individual soul. In Indian philosophy they call it Atman. In Christian theology they have the story of Adam and Eve which is very similar to Jnana Yoga, where they are called Atman and jiva. The Atman is the Self, with capital S or Consciousness, with capital C. The jiva is individual consciousness. This individual consciousness and Supreme Consciousness are not two in essence, but they appear to be two on account of faulty vision and this faulty vision is the fault of ignorance. Man has not been capable of attaining the vision of unity of these two forces. When the realization takes place,

when the individual consciousness and the Supreme Consciousness are the same, that is called the point of realization. In Jnana Yoga the ultimate purpose is to realize the identity of the individual soul and the cosmic soul, or the individual consciousness and the cosmic consciousness, or the I and the Supreme Being.

Jnana means knowledge in yogic philosophy. *Ajnana* means absence of knowledge. When you do not know it is called *ajnana*. Jnana means he knows. Now, what do we know? What should be known and what should not be known? According to Jnana Yoga each and every individual has to understand his identity with his real self. A time must come when you have transcended the mind and the barriers that belong to this universe or that belong to this gross plane. It is something like breaking a pitcher of water when the water becomes one with the rest of the water. If you have a tank and if you have a glass bottle and put some water in it and put a cork in it and submerge it in the water in the tank, the water in the bottle is separate from the rest of the water by limitations. When you break the bottle the water within it becomes one with the water in the tank.

Through the practice of Jnana Yoga these limitations in the personality, these limitations of ones fundamental concepts and philosophy have to be eliminated. But it is not so easy. Just by thinking about the supreme consciousness you do not realize it. So in Jnana Yoga there are certain practices, *sadhanas*, or practices for perfection. What are they?

First, listen about all this from a teacher and whatever you have heard from him you contemplate on that point according to the instructions given by him, so much so, that in contemplation you become

one with the process of contemplation. Mind must lose its complete identity. Mind must merge for the time being, if you are contemplating the Supreme Consciousness, or you are contemplating this identity, and so on, you must contemplate it in such a way that you forget all about your body, you forget all about your surroundings. For some time, for an hour or two, nothing is with you; it is something like a great meditation. You are one with the flow of the subject, you are not the thinker but you are the thought itself. You are not the contemplator, you are contemplation itself. This unity takes place and is the end of the second stage.

The third stage arises which is called intuition. Now, this intuition or intuitive knowledge should not be understood as psychic knowledge, as it is usually misunderstood in the western countries and also in India. According to this misunderstanding it is like the intuition of a medium. Here intuition means when you are thinking about a particular topic of Jnana Yoga, concerning your consciousness, concerning the higher truth, intuitive flashes come to you and there the truth is revealed. Whatever the truth may be, it is revealed in flashes, and that revelation can be called knowledge. That is Jnana, that revelation which comes to you without the medium of the senses or the mind. The senses are not involved. The mind is not involved, and the previous reference to knowledge is also not involved. Inferences are not involved. Without any basic source you arrive at knowledge and that knowledge pertains to reality in man and also outside him. This is the ultimate purpose of Jnana Yoga.

But before one should take to this Jnana Yoga, please remember, first of all the mind should be

one-pointed. If your mind is oscillating, is distracted, it will not be possible for you to maintain one flow of thinking. If you try it, you will find that after a few minutes there are many thoughts concerning other matters that are intercepting and intervening from all sides. You cannot maintain constancy of one thought. For instance, when you sit in the early morning or at night and think "Who am I", as Socrates said, "Know thyself", how are you going to start? Even as you write an article or an essay or a script for a motion picture, in the same way there must be a plan, there must be a way of thinking here also. What you have to think and how you proceed from point to point solving each point logically, rationally, try to understand it and then go further. That is to be known from a teacher.

"Who am I?" this is the first thing in Jnana Yoga which you have to say to yourself, but please, since I have spoken so much on consciousness and God and so on, do not get yourself super-imposed. "Who am I?" is a question and this question you have to answer. You should not say that you know the answer. You do not know the answer. You have only been informed by the books by great thinkers that you are that, or you are this, or you are not that or you are not this. Each and every one has to find this for himself. You can not depend on what I have spoken to you, or what I will talk about in the future. I can only give guidance. This is a fundamental principle in Jnana Yoga, the Jnana yogi has only one question before him, "Who am I?", that is all. He is trying to solve this problem by thinking, by himself. Replies come to him but he does not accept them. Not because he does not like the replies but he keeps himself open to the

new answers. Because, when your mind becomes more purified you get better answers. It is something like looking into a mirror.

The mirror is dirty, and the reflection is poor. You ask your little child to clean it and he does it with a dirty apron. He does clean it but it is not clear, and still your face does not appear clearly in the mirror. Then you ask your older children or your maid servant to clean it and they do it properly. You look into the mirror and that is truly your face. In the same way the reply to the fundamental question "Who am I?" will come to you in different ways. Sometimes you may see it as "I am God." Well it cannot be because without realizing it, without experiencing it, without assimilating it, with becoming one with it, how can you say that you are immortal. Maybe it is wrong or maybe it is right. I am Supreme Consciousness. Well, it is very easy to say. I also feel every morning that I am Shiva, I am Om, I am Brahman, I am all, but I do not experience it. Because the mind which is capable of experiencing this great utterance is not this mind which is broken and shattered. The mind as an element, the mind as an object, has to undergo the process of purification, an evolution by constant contemplation. But if you ask a Jnana yogi to practice asanas and pranayama he will say no.

It is written in the original texts that when you feel that you are one with cosmic consciousness that is called inhalation and when you retain that knowledge in your mind for a period of time that is called *kumbhak*, retention. When you exhale you say I am not the body, I am not the mind, I am not the senses, that is exhalation. This is called the pranayama of Jnana yogis. It is true that the

pranayama of Raja yogins has a very important part to play in everyday life. We cannot underrate it. Please do not take it as a criticism. But this pranayama which a Jnana yogin is supposed to do is inhalation of a particular topic, retention of the topic for a period of time and exhalation of another thought. In the same way in Jnana Yoga it is not important that you sit in the lotus pose, or adept pose, *siddhasana* or you close your eyes, with your spine upright and straight. They say at any time, in any place, in any way, you can just think, "Who am I?". This is the fundamental philosophy of Jnana yoga, which tries to solve the great riddle of life, which has not been answered as yet, by one's own thinking, by one's own contemplation.

But before I conclude this topic may I tell you that Jnana yoga according to the ancient texts is the yoga for a few. Otherwise, if it is for all, it becomes too intellectual and it has been so in the east and the west. I do come across people who talk a lot about consciousness, who talk a lot about God, who talk a lot about divine being, etc., but it is not possible for them to retain their mind on one topic even for one minute. Their minds are completely broken and shattered into pieces. Therefore, it is the advice of everybody that one should understand that no man is purely rational. Everyone is an admixture of dynamism, emotion, psyche, and rationalism. Maybe you are predominantly rational, but you cannot say that you are completely rational. You have the elements of Raja Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga in you.

Therefore, if you have realized that you are predominantly rational, still you must follow the path

of dynamism, karma, devotion to God, and Raja Yoga, the path of meditation. If you have determined that you are predominantly a Raja yogin then it is good to follow the path of meditation, but include the elements of dynamism, devotion and rationalism. Include these elements in your practices. If you have realized that you are a devotee by temperament you can always give more of your thought and heart to God but please remember that you are not only that. You have in you the elements of dynamism, meditation and rationalism. Similarly, if you feel that you are predominantly dynamic, do not only practice Karma Yoga, but also practice a little bit of Bhakti, of meditation and a little bit of self-analysis and contemplation.

This is known as complete yoga. This is known as integral yoga, and this Sri Aurobindo used to call the yoga of synthesis. We are truly synthetic beings. You are not purely emotional, you are not purely dynamic. You are not purely Raja yogis and you are not purely Jnana yogis. So if you want to take to the practice of Jnana Yoga, you should not try to avoid the practices of Raja Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga. Then your life will become full.

It is said that by Karma Yoga one becomes free from the psychological cobwebs. By Bhakti Yoga one becomes one pointed, dissipation and distraction are completely rent asunder. By Raja Yoga meditation you make your personality steady, calm and quiet. Then you take to Jnana Yoga, so that you can sit for one, two, three hours constantly contemplating as to who you are.

This in short is an introduction to Jnana Yoga.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Bhakti Yoga: Devotional Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Belfast, Northern Ireland, March 11, 1971

This is a very difficult subject for me because bhakti is my personal yoga. It is in fact something which I can understand myself, but find it very difficult to give an exposition of. Not because I know nothing about it but because I think bhakti is my experience and not a part of my intellect. Karma Yoga, Kriya Yoga and Jnana Yoga and for that matter Raja Yoga are the subjects which are known through books. I have done something of them myself but Bhakti Yoga is my personal spiritual practice, to which I have been clinging right from the beginning of my spiritual career. I do not disagree with any other forms of yoga, because I am aware that not everybody has the same temperament. But at the same time I know for certain that Bhakti Yoga is the easiest.

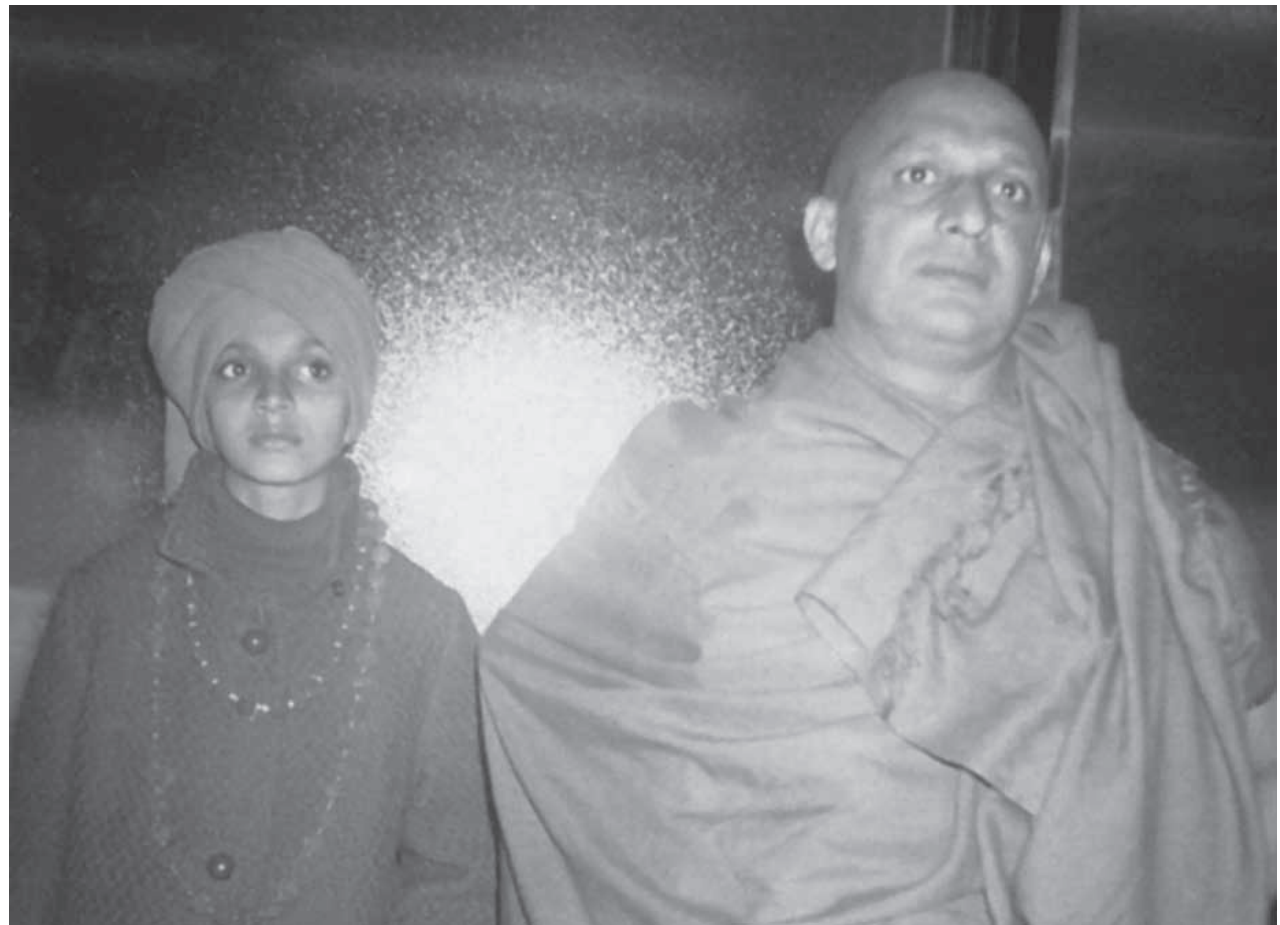
In the words of Swami Sivananda, "It is the safest, quickest and the best method," not only for self-realization but for any kind of accomplishment in this material world. Even if you are not given to spiritual realization and seeking of truth, if you are a man given to ambitions and accomplishments, pertaining to this external life, the materialistic society, Bhakti Yoga can definitely help you to a final extent.

There is not one item in Bhakti Yoga which is difficult. There is only faith which is required. There are other forms of Bhakti Yoga which I shall explain to you,

but at the very outset I can tell you that without faith there is no bhakti. There is no devotion.

At the same time the faith is not in the form of belief, it is a firm conviction; a conviction which intellect can never fight through. No logic, no argumentation, no rationalism, nothing of this sort can put down this faith which is the personality, which is the deepest personality of everyone.

Bhakti Yoga depends on faith, and this faith is not intellectual conviction, it is a very innocent conviction. It is perhaps the conviction of a child, who takes his mother to be his mother. He never questions how she could be his mother, maybe she is not. Like an innocent child who takes his father to be his father, does not even question for a moment how could he be, maybe he is not the father, and this innocent faith, does not



accept any kind of questioning and more so when the experience is with us.

At the very beginning of a great epic in India, called Ramayana, the life of Rama, who Hindus respect as an incarnation of the Supreme God – the author, a very humble man, writes that faith is the ultimate source of power and realization and a man without faith is a man without devotion. One should not go into detail to analyze, to scrutinize, to define and to put the faith into the X-ray of the intellect.

Once the faith has been realized, once you have discovered the faith that is in you, you can immediately start practicing Bhakti Yoga. The faith cannot be imported from outside, through books, or through holy associations or the company of saints and sages. Faith is a dormant potential lying in you. Reading the books that were written by saints, spending time in the company of great men, and all other forms of Bhakti Yoga, is to awaken this faith. Therefore, the purpose of the practices in Bhakti Yoga is to awaken this faith through which you will have a definite glimpse of God.

In Jnana Yoga, as I have explained, the aspirant feels that I am Supreme Consciousness. In Karma Yoga the aspirant feels that the whole world is the manifestation of God. In Raja Yoga he feels that Supreme Consciousness is God.

But in Bhakti Yoga it is very necessary that you must have a personal concept of God. The God for a bhakta is personal, is not impersonal, is not abstract, is not a metaphysical God and is not a philosophical God. For him God is as real as himself. Therefore, it is said by the great sages and saints in India, God is father, mother, friend, relative and everything. For a devotee God comes in the form of a voice, in the form of a man.

In so many stories, I do not know if the people in the west are aware of these legends, but in India, we have hundreds and thousands of stories, and we have experienced it in our own life. We have had the experience that God does come in a manifested state, like a man in order to help his devotee. And the bhakta does not question, he does not analyze where he comes from? A Raja yogi might say that he is a manifestation of your creative will, but the bhakta says no.

I will tell you one story which is not beyond my personal knowledge; of course it has nothing to do with me.

In the province where I have my ashram, in the city where I have my ashram, there was a school inspector belonging to the department of education, only 25 years ago. He was a great bhakta. He used to spend his mornings and evenings in worship, in prayer, in devotion and at the same time he used to serve the swamis and the saints and the godly men. Any swami who came to Munger he definitely brought into his home, gave him good food and gave him all that a poor educational inspector could give. He was only earning during those days about 3 or maybe 4 Pounds Sterling a month.

One day it so happened that the moment he was going out for his inspection tour of a school in a remote village a few swamis passed by his door. He prostrated to them and brought them into his house, cooked food for them, fed them properly. After about three hours he gave them a farewell and they went away. On his bicycle he went to the school, where he was supposed to do inspection, according to the rules of the government.

When he entered the school premises, a distance of about 11 miles from his home, the watchman of the school came running to him in surprise asking how it

was that he came again. The watchman said, "Sir, did you forget something that you came back again?" He answered, "No, I never came here, actually I missed my inspection, but I wish to take the register and make an endorsement so that the entry is there. I want to sign the inspection book so that the government does not take any action against me." Because that is the rule that the inspector has to go to the school on the scheduled date otherwise he is suspended. The watchman said, "But you did come." He said, no he did not come.

Well, he went to the register, opened the inspection book and found his own signature. There was his own signature which was of course forged because he did not write it. He started thinking as to what had happened. "Who has forged my signature, who has come to my rescue and who has come to my relief?" For a moment he stood there and he had a vision, he had an inspiration. The idea came to him that there is a force that is the personal God who can do anything for the sake of his devotee, in order to relieve him of troubles, in order to give him support in this life of afflictions and agony, and he can take care of anything. He thought, "Foolish am I who is trudging this way."

From that school he never went home. He never went back to Munger, he went to Ayodhya which is the place where Rama the great respected God of the Hindus was born and he spent most of his life there, telling everyone only one thing. "Do not worry about anything. If you have to get your children educated, if you have to get rid of any trouble, just surrender completely, mentally, intellectually, emotionally and everything will take place." He was an ordinary man, those people who believed in him, did have great and good experiences in life. This is just one example which I can say with authority did happen which I am putting before you.

This is the example of Bhakti Yoga. For a bhakta, for a devotee, God is not an abstract reality, for him He is like a helper, nearest to him, nearer than the breath, nearer than his own mind and nearer to him than his own existence. But this is not an abstract thing for him, he comes in human form. Almost all Indians, except a few intellectualized people believe that whenever one has troubles, confusion, problems in life, why should he depend on external aid, why should he depend on man, on the man who himself has a problem? The doctor has a problem; the psychologist has his own problem. Maybe a few swamis have their own problems, maybe the man from whom you seek help and aid has his own problem. How can they rid you of your problems? It is better to depend on one who can get you out of the problems. It is this particular faith that sustains the very edifice of Bhakti Yoga.

Then comes love, a love that is divine. In the Sufi Cult of the Muslims, it is said that there are two kinds of love, that there are two expressions of love. One is the real and the divine love and the other is the material love, where the senses are involved, where the mind is involved and where the matter in the form of body and object is involved. This love which is material, which is empirical and which is earthly, is the cause of pain, is the cause of confusion and is the cause of all agonies in man, because it blinds his vision. But the divine love is something very great and it is this divine love, which is a very important element in Bhakti Yoga.

If you practice Bhakti, any item of Bhakti, any ceremony, any worship, any prayer or sing or repeat a name of the Lord, if you do it without love, then it is tasteless. Because it is on the level of matter, it is on the level of the senses, it is on a surface level and therefore, today thousands of theists, the believers

in God are failing to get maximum possible help and miraculous help from the divine Source.

The love, the divine love in bhakti is a very important element, because man is an embodiment of love. You are an embodiment of love. I am an embodiment of love. Love is the personality of man and not hatred. Man hates because he is taught to hate but love is his real nature. Hatred is a super-imposition. Love is so much in man, love is so much in animals, love is so much in the animal and vegetable kingdoms that it is very difficult to consume that love, to utilize that love. The love that you have in you, which is your real nature, you are not able to give. What you give to your children and what you give to your wife and what you give to your friends and the love which you give to the things of the world is just a small part of that infinite love that you are.

Therefore, this excess of love, this excess of emotion in man, is causing all the problems in him. This surplus emotion in you is the cause of all agonies, or frustrations, breakdowns and suicides and so on and so forth. There is nothing in the world which can consume this surplus emotion. How much love can you give to your children? How much love can you give to your wife? And how much love can you give to anything in this world? All is impossible because you love them through your mind, and your love has barriers, it has limitations, it has boundaries and it has a selfish imposition.

As such you find that the moment you give your love to the people of this world the love is rebounded. It is reacted, it is not consumed and your wife cannot consume your love. Your friend, your husband, your children or anybody, including myself and yourself, we cannot consume the emotion that you have.

Even as the rain, the water during the rainy season, which falls in a very large quantity, cannot be contained

in one small tank, much less in a small gallon container or in a small place. The tank is filled up, and the water overflows. It causes disaster. In the same way when you are projecting your emotions on human beings, the human beings are not able to consume the entire stock of emotions. And as such what happens? It overflows. This overflowing emotion must have a way out.

How can you love an abstract God? How can you love an impersonal God? How can you love a God which has no form? How can you love a God whom you do not know? How can you love a God who is so great, so cosmic?

Therefore, it is very important, even from the psychological point of view too, that you must have a personal God to whom you can give all your love and all your emotions. It is true, that he is the ocean of love and he can also accept and he can also contain all the love that flows from you. Therefore, we say God is the emotion of love. He can definitely give an ample place to all your emotions which have not been accepted, which have not been respected, which have not been amply rewarded by the people whom you loved. Love is a very important element in Bhakti Yoga.

Now, this love is a very peculiar love. According to the Indian system of Bhakti Yoga, you can love God as you love your husband, or as you love your wife. You can love God as you love your son or as you love your father. You can love God as you love your friend, or as you love your master or as you love your servant. These are the different attitudes; these are the different emotional attitudes which you can project on love.

To give an example: A great saint of India whose name you may like to remember and study later on, and whose songs are sung all over the country by rich and poor, by literate and illiterate, was a lady called Mira Bai. She was the princess of one of the most

powerful states of India during the sixteenth century. When she was a small girl of eight, a swami came to her and gave her a small idol of Lord Krishna, the cowherd boy, who is considered to be the perfect incarnation of the Supreme Being and is one of the ten incarnations of God which Hindus worship. Mira started worshipping that idol of Lord Krishna, Shyam, Krishna as her husband. Now the time came when she was supposed to be married, but she said, how can I marry another man, when I have already married the Lord Krishna.

But the people of the world could not understand her innocent and great emotions. They married her to a great king who was also very powerful in the western part of India in the sixteenth century who was himself not a great devotee.

She went to her husband's home and was expected to live like a queen, but she was so much God intoxicated that the palace could not retain nor could it capture her. Her mother-in-law got very much annoyed with her, because every evening she used to leave the palace and go to the temples of Krishna and then she used to partake in singing the name, and sometimes while in ecstasy she used to dance and fall into ecstatic trances which perhaps the orthodox society of that time could never understand. They could not understand how the queen of a very powerful state, and respectable state could behave this way. So her mother-in-law was very angry. Her husband was also very angry. Her husband ultimately decided that she should be killed. So they prepared the poison and sent it to her. The maidservant brought the poison and she drank it and in her own poems Mira writes that the cup of poison was sent by the king. Mira drank it and laughed at it. That is the song she sang.

Then the mother-in-law also tried to finish her off, because it was a question of the prestige of the whole

state and the royal family. She put a few cobras in a tin, in a gift box, and through somebody passed them to Mira. When the tin was opened, there was the idol of Krishna.

One night when she was in her apartment, she was overheard talking to somebody in the apartment. The vicious and evil-minded, suspicious maids and maidservants brought the news to the king and said that Mira is talking to some man in the room. So he became furious and with a sword in hand, he came to her room. He listened at the door, yes she was talking to someone, and definitely she was talking to someone. He broke open the door but there was no one. He asked, "With whom are you talking?" She said, "I am talking to my beloved." He asked, "Who is your beloved?" She answered, "My Krishna is my beloved." He said, "Where is he?" She said, "I can see him, but how can you see him because you do not love him?"

Without love God can not be seen, and God **can** be seen. God can be seen but without love you cannot see him. You cannot say first I will see him and then I will believe in him, because this is a kind of puzzle. If I see him once then I believe in him. The whole thing is that you must have love for him then only can you see him. Because the moment you love, these eyes are blinded. These eyes do not function. It is a different eye that functions. You may call it the third eye; I would prefer to call it the fourth eye. When love reaches the brim of life, at that moment when it becomes spontaneous, when it becomes overwhelming then these eyes that see material objects that belong to the laws of relativity, do not function. At that time a different vision is opened, and the vision is known as the God vision. It is with the opening of that eye that you can

see God. Maybe you think that I see God here in this place but it is something very difficult and something very different.

So now you understand that Bhakti is such an overwhelming topic of life and in this particular world where we live today there are millions and millions of people who question God. There are also swamis, philosophers, also great thinkers, who talk about God in a way which perhaps they can never understand. They write about God, they fight for him, but they do not know that God is so simple. He is not so complicated. He does not need many things; he does not need even intellectual attainment. Yes, that is the most important point I am going to come to. You can keep in mind that it is not by intellect, not by affluence, not by reading a lot of scriptures and mastering a lot of prayers that you reach God. Even the most illiterate man, who knows nothing about anything of this mortal world, can have the vision of God and can receive the best from him. Once this path is open to you, the whole life is clear – green signal. This is the green signal. Everything is clear. You do not need anything to be done.

You go to your job in the morning, fetch money for your children, and fetch bread and butter in the evening, drive your car and that is all. Relax on your bed. Any problem that comes to you, you say, let it come. It is going to be solved because my God can do everything. You do not have to say prayers, at least those prayers which are worded by poets. The prayer is internal. It is not in words, it is in the feelings. You understand much better. How do you express love? Do you express it in words or do you express it in feelings? It is a feeling and that feeling is the prayer. If you feel that your problems, your difficulties, your confusions, maybe external or internal, maybe subjective or objective, can

be rent asunder, can be eliminated in totality, then in that case the whole thing is very clear.

Now, the path of Bhakti Yoga can be developed by every one. In this, the most important item now becomes japa; saying the name by the practices of Mantra Yoga. Any mantra which you take should be repeated in the morning and at night. If you are free, you should do more. If you are not free, do it in the morning as soon as you leave your bed. Please do not go to have a bath. It is not even necessary that you go to the toilet and have a wash, just close your eyes. The first thing in the morning you close your eyes and take your mala in your hand and repeat the mantra, the name. When you are repeating the mantra you must feel in this way. 'Though I do not see God, I am sure he is here.' Though I do not see him, I know he is here. If your intellect, this blessed (I do not know if I should say blessed or bloody) but this blessed intellect tells you. "Oh, God is inside", you say "no, I do not know all these things, I feel, he is here, although I do not see him." You must contradict every suggestion of intellect. Intellect never tells the truth.

Please remember, intellect is the greatest liar that I have ever experienced in my life. It says many things, all lies. Intellect is the greatest liar, you cannot rely on intellect. It is the greatest cause of confusions; you see it in your western world. The intellect is necessary to get the money in exchange, to run the family, to run the shop and business and all sorts of court cases and crimes and guns and politics and everything else, but not so far as the bhakti is concerned, not so far as your devotion to the Lord is concerned.

Then at the end of the japa, at the end of the Japa Yoga, or Mantra Yoga, you must say just one thing. "I want that my devotion to you shall increase like the moon that goes

on to become full. It should not wane, it should grow." That should be the only *sankalpa*, that should be the only resolution, that should be the only prayer, day after day. Even today, even to this day, even this morning, when I got up, I only said, "I want my devotion and attachment and love and faith for you to increase and be greater than it was yesterday and I want to feel your presence in conscious, subconscious and unconscious life, wherever I am, I must feel your presence."

Even as a man who has a beautiful girl friend, new girl friend, wherever he goes, he may do hundreds of jobs, but she is always before him. He does not see her. Maybe he does not even say her name, he does not even think about her in his conscious mind, but he is aware of her. He is aware of her all the time on the conscious and subconscious plane. It is this kind of awareness of God that one must have in life.

At the same time at night before you go to bed you must do your japa, your mantra and then ultimately put down your mala. Well you may have your own method, I suggest to you from my experience that you must say only one thing, "The whole day I passed and I wish that this day had been a day which I had spent with you, but somehow or the other I have been very far from you, I want you to come nearer to me. If not in this waking state, come at least in my dreams.", and you will have a fine dream.

During your leisure hours the mantra must be repeated. It is a great misunderstanding in the minds of the people that the mantras belong to any religion, that God belongs to any religion, God has no religion. God belongs to all religions. Name is different. Form is different but ultimately God is the ocean of love. He is your friend, he is your guide. Without pride and without personal reference of course, I can only say

that from the time I entered the spiritual life, I have tried all methods, yoga asanas, pranayama, mudras, bandhas, Jnana Yoga, and Raja Yoga. But I found that bhakti is the most soothing item of my life. I am not saying that I have led a life without problems, objective and subjective both, because all the years of my life I feel that I have been a wanderer and a traveler. But during every moment, I feel that he is there. During the course of my management and administration of not one but many different institutions in India, I never worried from the very beginning concerning anything that happened in the ashrams. Any event most tragic or terrible, I knew nothing is going to happen. I have the conviction about the financial problems. When the management comes to me from different sources and says, "We have no money to run things", "I say, "Don't worry, it comes." Because I know that the inner voice tells me that it comes and there has been no problem in any of the institutions.

Wherever I go I say the same thing to all the swamis. I say, "Do not worry about anything. Things come. You must have faith in God." And you should not talk about God in those impersonal terms. You must take him in your pocket. You must keep him in your pocket. Do you know where the pocket for God is? It is in your left side, it is in the heart. Heart is the pocket where you always have him, and the person has to refer to him at all times. I do not know exactly how to tell you, it is so difficult for me. This Bhakti Yoga is the easiest, is the safest, is the quickest, is the best and is the cheapest also. You can take it in any way you like.

Please do not stop practicing asanas and pranayama, because that will help you physically.

This is a very short introduction to Bhakti Yoga.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Raja and Hatha Yoga: The Mastery of Self

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Belfast, Northern Ireland, March 12, 1971

Modern man needs control over the different dimensions of his consciousness. Since he has become a very practical man, his views and his aspirations are based on those concepts of philosophy which talk about the self in terms of personal and individual consciousness. That he should improve physically, mentally, emotionally, and psychically, is his desire and his ambition. As such, modern man has come to the point where he needs Raja Yoga because Raja Yoga gives him a program and not merely a philosophy.

In the practices of Raja Yoga a believer, as well as, a non-believer will find a way for himself. During my past world tours I have been to some of the communist countries and I found that many scientists and the technologists were greatly interested in the subject of Raja Yoga.

Raja Yoga deals with the consciousness of man, the consciousness which is immediately known to him by means of which he thinks rightly, as well as, wrongly. This is a very important point. Every one knows that most of the difficulties in human life are created by one's own mind. As such the mind must be cured; it must be made free from all its bad habits and conditionings. Hence the practice of Raja Yoga is a very important item in our life.

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The author of the Raja Yoga Philosophy was born 2500 years ago and was a contemporary of the Lord Buddha. His name was Patanjali. Although the system of Raja Yoga existed long before that, it was he who systematized it in a treatise. He wrote a small book called the *Yoga Philosophy* or the *Yoga of the Eight Steps*. In that book of Raja Yoga he begins with the following great utterance: "To have complete control over all the functions of consciousness is yoga. " The definition of Raja Yoga states that it is complete control over all the manifestations or functions or patterns of consciousness, whether they be conscious, subconscious, unconscious, or anything beyond that. This control over all the patterns of consciousness can be achieved by many methods but the most direct method is meditation, which is known as Dhyana Yoga. I am deliberately using the word *dhyana* which means complete awareness. It has been translated as meditation, but this does not convey the idea which is inherent in the word dhyana. It is from the word dhyana that the name Zen Buddhism has originated in the Far East.

Dhyana is very important. One pointed awareness; awareness of one object for a period of time without intervention of any other thought is dhyana. In the practice of Dhyana Yoga, in the practice of this yoga of meditation, you try to bring all the tendencies of your mind to focus on one point, one object, whatever that might be. You then try to visualize that object for a particular period of time and you see that the mind does not fluctuate, that the thoughts do not wander away, this way or that way. But it is a difficult thing and you can not start Dhyana Yoga all of a sudden. You need preparation and the preparation is in Raja Yoga.

In the first step of Raja Yoga they will ask you to make yourself free from those items of life which are responsible for the creation of tensions and complexes. This is a very important topic. Modern man may not believe in those things. He may just set them aside as ethics and morality, but in Raja Yoga the concept of ethics and morality is completely based on the notion of mental health. If the practice of Raja Yoga implies that you should not speak a lie, that is, that you should not utter a falsehood, it only means that by uttering the falsehood you are creating an unhealthy condition in your personal mind. Furthermore, you are creating certain patterns which are confusing and sometimes in the future they will influence your behavior as well as your mind. There are those items at the very outset of the practice of Raja Yoga, which you may tend to relegate to ethics and morality, and you may say we all know the Ten Commandments. But their purpose in Raja Yoga is to prepare your mind and make it free from all those activities and items which can possibly create mental ill health. When you free your mind of mental tensions then you proceed further.

If one is suffering from nervous depressions or pain in the heart or any other disease which may be either psychological or psychosomatic, the first thing that one should do is to make one's life as free as possible from those items and activities which are responsible for creating more complexes. The load must be removed and that is the first step in Raja Yoga.

Then you come to the practice of asana. *Asana* means posture, not exercise. Asana means to take a seat, to be firmly seated and therefore in Raja Yoga, asanas should not mean exercises, they should always mean yoga postures. These yoga postures are the

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lotus pose, the shoulder stand pose, the cobra, the locust, the fish pose, or the headstand pose, etc. You are supposed to practice them by maintaining each posture for a period of time, not like exercises. If you practice *shirshasana*, the headstand pose, you stand on your head and maintain that posture for a period of time so that the body attains complete stability and the nervous system also becomes tranquilized. The asana part of Raja Yoga is very important. It is not only physical and physiological, but more than that

it is psycho-physiological. These exercises – these so called exercises – are not exercises in fact, but they are postures. They influence the nervous system, the glands and the internal functions. All of you are aware of the influence of the glands of the human body, such as the pituitary, para-thyroid, thymus, pineal, pancreas, adrenal, sex glands, and so on. Any influence on these glands, stimulation or inhibition of a particular gland can result in psychological complexes.

Our modern psychologists may or may not agree with this, but in Raja Yoga it is said that if you are suffering from a kind of mental disease or psychological disease, it is not at all important that it should be psychoanalyzed. Your physiological system and the glandular secretions must be brought into a perfect balance thus resulting in a balance in the metabolism, consisting of catabolism, and anabolism. The thyroids must be neither inhibited nor stimulated. The pituitary functions must also be brought under control so that they not only regulate one particular gland in the body but also regulate the entire group of glands in the body, because it is the master gland. Therefore, it is said that the head stand pose is the master pose. You must have read in some of the books that it is the greatest posture. It is called the king posture, merely because the posture of *shirshasana* has immediate bearing on the pituitary gland regardless as to whether it is the anterior or the posterior portion. The different hormones that are secreted by the pituitary body and which are assimilated by the whole system can bring good health as well as ill health. So you must understand that the effects of yoga postures are not only physiological. It is also possible that the great mental diseases, the psychological complexes,

the inhibitions, neuroses and many other psychic ailments can be effectively controlled by these so called physical postures.

In the science of physiology a great revolution is taking place, of which perhaps you are aware. In the advanced science of physiology we have come to believe that these so called psychological diseases are not really psychological but are offspring of faulty physiological conditions in the body. You may say that you are suffering from anxiety neurosis and a master of psychology would suggest that maybe you had a faulty childhood and so on and so forth, well you know all this. But we are coming to the point now, not only in yoga but in modern science also, that your anxiety neurosis may be an outcome of a faulty condition in a particular part of your nervous or psychic system; and maybe if you are able to control the psychic nerves or the center of the psychic nerves or you are able to control the wrong and faulty secretions of the hormones, you may be able to control the anxiety neurosis.

Therefore, yoga completely agrees with this latest attainment of science. Whatever may be your problem, please understand that it is intrinsically linked with this body, this brain, and the nervous system. What we call Ida and Pingala in Raja Yoga and Hatha Yoga are nothing but the sympathetic and the parasympathetic nervous systems, and what we call the nadis, other nerve centers, are the subtle nerve centers that are accepted by the modern science also. When we talk about the chakras, the psychic centers, such as the sacral, epigastric, or hypogastric, solar, cardiac, cervix, pineal, pituitary, cranial plexuses, they are Muladhara, Swadhisthana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddhi, Ajna, Bindu, and Sahasrara, which are

much talked about in the science of Kundalini Yoga and this is a science about which we can talk in terms of modern science.

So the practice of asanas does not merely give you proper digestion, by stimulating the digestive functions, the saliva, the hydrochloric acid and the different enzymes, etc. , it can control and revive the pancreatic gland and its functioning and, consequently, the flow of the insulin also. Not by pressure, as many yoga teachers would tell you, but my managing it through the medium of the sympathetic or para-sympathetic nervous system. All these glands are brought into a state of revival. They are revived not by pressure, but by postures which first of all influence your nervous system and the impulses first created in the highest centers of the brain. Then it is brought to a particular part of the gland through the medium of the nervous system especially the parasympathetic nervous system. This is how control of the adrenal or sex glands or pancreas or thyroid or pineal or pituitary takes place. Those of you who have studied endocrinology should definitely study this part of yoga.

We believe that there are three great centers in the body which control all the glands. In yoga they are called Granthis. *Granthi* means knot, a gland, in Sanskrit. There are three important ones: Brahma Granthi, the gland of creation; Vishnu Granthi, the knot or gland of maintenance; and Rudra Granthi, the knot or the gland of degeneration. These three control the entire group of endocrines and they in turn can be controlled with the help of yoga postures.

I have given you only a glimpse of the subject. I cannot say everything about yoga postures. Raja Yoga has a message. With the help of these yoga postures

you not only get rid of your physical ailments, but you can also bring about a healthy state of mind.

Do not talk about your “bad childhood” or “your bad parents”. Oh! I am tired of the people in the west. Whenever they come for an interview they say, “Swamiji, I think this is all due to the fact that my mother was not kind to me!” “Swamiji, this is so because I think my childhood has been very unfortunate!” I have studied Freud, I have studied Jung and Adler and many other psychologists including Pavlov, but I think we need only a very simple formula. We do not need an intricate formula because all our problems are very simple problems. They have been made intricate. If any of you here belong to that profession please excuse me for making a very frank statement, you should not misunderstand my frankness! Our problems are very simple, but we have a very intricate vision of our problems. This is so because we want to have an intricate vision of our problems to feed our ego. If I have a fever, this fever nobody else has. If I am having trouble with the eyes, oh! It is peculiar to me and no one else ever had it. That explanation gives the ego satisfaction.

The key point is that you should try to improve yourself through this method of understanding that all your psychological behavior is an outcome of faulty and erroneous physiological conditions. If your EEG shows a certain oscillation and you practice shirshasana or any other asana, the curve will change and the doctor will say, “Hey, his curve has changed. Now there is no anxiety neurosis, there is no nervousness”. The whole thing seems to be a play of deeper elements of chemistry in the brain. Please understand me! It is not an unscientific statement that I am making. It is absolutely in accordance with the

most modern medical discoveries, which are current in March 1971. This faulty chemistry of the most powerful secretions in the brain should be remedied. They should be brought under control, in order to control anger, in order to control passion, in order to control hatred, in order to control jealousy. Do not get involved in intricate theories and practices. Straightforward practices purify the brain, and this purification of the brain can be brought about with the help of pranayama, which is the next step in Raja Yoga.

Regarding pranayama there is also a great misunderstanding prevalent. *Pranayama* means control over prana. Prana has come to mean breath but prana is not breath. Prana is not imported. You cannot inhale prana. *Prana* is the energy, is the bio-energy, well something like that. It is the vitality in the body. It is the heat, the Shakti and it is with you. You come with prana. You cannot get prana from breath. Therefore, pranayama means having absolute mastery and control over the prana.

In the system of pranayama what do we do? We breathe in, we retain the breath for a period of time, then we breathe out and then we retain the breath out for a period of time. That is all we do. But by this we are not only doing lung exercises, it does not only influence the respiratory system, nor does it only influence the cardiac system, but the influence goes right up to the brain. The whole brain is under the influence of prana. But it does not happen directly. When you practice pranayama first the sacral nerve channels are stimulated. First those fibers of the nervous system which are situated at the bottom, at the base in the perineum or in the cervix are stimulated. That stimulation awakens parts of the brain and thus by the

practice of pranayama the nervous system is brought under control. Those suffering from nervousness, or tremors or depression, lack of self confidence, stammering, shyness or who cannot face people, who feel guilty about themselves, should definitely practice pranayama. It is true that the practice of pranayama supplies the organism with more oxygen and relieves it of unnecessary carbon dioxide. It is also true that pranayama purifies the blood thereby and the purifying influence is conducted to the highest centers in the brain. But at the same time please remember, that with the help of pranayama you can get rid of asthma, sinus problems, colds, cough, nervousness, epilepsy, hysteria and other such horrible problems.

Pranayama is psychic and psychosomatic at the same time. It is said that with pranayama you can even relax. In the western world people always want to relax. They try to relax. But please remember relaxation means not trying to relax. If you try to relax it is not relaxation, it should be spontaneous. Practice pranayama with your eyes closed for 15 minutes and try not to relax yourself. Keep yourself tense, as tense as possible. But by the time the pranayama is over you will feel that you are completely relaxed. Relaxation is not only muscular; it is both mental and emotional relaxation. You ask yourself, how one can relax emotionally? How can one relax mentally? If you lie down on the bed at night, I agree that you can relax yourself physically, that is, bring about muscular relaxation. But you can not get rid of your mental tension by physical rest, by taking a few tranquilizers, by a little change at the club, the pictures, T. V. and so on.

So, how does one relax mental tensions, cerebral tensions, hyper-tensions in the brain, tensions in the

cardiac system, tensions in the different portions of the body and in the greater systems of the body? If one of your glands is in tension, what are you going to do? Is there any way out? No! Mostly it is the pituitary, which is under tension in the modern man. How to get rid of it? Practice pranayama. Practice pranayama from Muladhara right up to Sahasrara, the pituitary and there concentrate on Sahasrara, concentrate on the crown, concentrate on the area of the thousand petalled lotus, and afterwards you will see visions and so on and so forth. You will feel better! That is how one should relax. If you have pain in a particular part of your body, concentrate on that part of your body and prana will be awakened. If you have a headache, concentrate there and the headache will be over. If you have pain in the heart, concentrate and the prana will be awakened, and this is how the healing takes place. The prana is inherent. The prana is within us. We have to awaken the prana and for the awakening of prana, pranayama should be practised.

Then, after pranayama comes the spiritual side of Raja Yoga. The detachment of the sense-cortex from the motor cortex, in the language of science is in Raja Yoga called *pratyahara*. What does *pratyahara* mean? The mind is associated and connected with the sense organs. Through the sense organs it receives stimuli, from objects. If you want to go in you will have to cut off these stimuli or these links for some time. So here is the sense cortex and here is the motor cortex and they are linked. That link has got to be cut down. The senses and the mind should be separated. In Raja Yoga they say the senses responsible for action, *karma*, and the senses responsible for *jnana*, perception, should be detached from each other. This

disassociation of mental and physical principles leads to absolute relaxation.

When the mind is connected – this is an important topic of Raja Yoga – when the mind is in association with the objects through the sense medium, then it experiences pleasure and pain. When your mind is in association with the objects of perception, through the medium of the sense of sight, for instance, it experiences pleasure and pain. So it is with the ears, with the nose, and with every part of the body that is capable of experiencing. If you want the mind to be free from pain and grief, then you should know how to relax.

In Denmark, when I experimented on the drug-addicted boys, the first thing that I did was to teach them *pratyahara*. In Raja Yoga it is the fifth step known as *pratyahara*, which means retreat or withdrawal of the mind and which also means disassociation of the mental principle from the physical media. I gave them a few exercises in *pratyahara*, enough so that within 15 or twenty minutes their minds were completely detached from the external experiences and they liked that practice very much. They continued and some of them had very successful experiences in this act of *pratyahara*. *Pratyahara* literally means ‘returning’ or ‘retreat’. It means that the mind, which is facing the objects, is now returning from the objects. The consciousness has been withdrawn or the consciousness is being withdrawn from the objects. Now this relationship is peculiar. The consciousness is always experiencing and this process of experiencing is constant. The experience is taking place consciously, subconsciously, and also unconsciously. You can not stop it even while you sleep at night, even while you

are dreaming. Even if you are not interested, it does not matter. The consciousness is so sensitive; the mind is so sensitive, like a sensitive microphone, that it is accepting all the influences which are within the range of your knowledge, as well as, those which are not within the range of your knowledge.

Complete disassociation of the mind from matter should take place. This is known as *pratyahara*. As soon as you are able to withdraw your mind temporarily from the gross objects, from the external life, that is relaxation, that is perfect rest. Therefore, all those people who feel tired after their day’s business should try to sit down in a particular posture and then do a particular exercise in *pratyahara*. In fifteen to twenty minutes they will find that they are getting better.

Now concerning the spiritual life. By *pratyahara* withdraw your mind from the external objects. After having done this successfully, you pick yourself one symbol. Remember, I am not talking about God but I am talking about a symbol. Mind needs a basis. Without a basis you cannot formulate mind into a pattern. If you have no glass, where will you put the tea, the water? Mind is fluid, it is in the form of consciousness and this mind has got to be brought into one pattern if you want to see your mind. You can ‘see’ your mind and you have seen your mind many times, in different dimensions and with different eyes. This ‘seeing’ of your mind is very important. How can you see your mind? In order to see the mind you must have a pictorial mandala as it is called in modern psychology. In yoga they say you must have a symbol. The symbol may be gross, medium or subtle. A gross symbol is an object outside. A medium symbol is a symbol inside such as a chakra or a psychic centre.

A subtle symbol is an idea. Either you concentrate on an object, or you concentrate on a centre in the body or you concentrate on an idea, one of the three. The easiest one is the gross. This gross object may be the form of Om, or a red triangle, it may be a blue lotus or a star or a crescent moon, or anything for the matter of that. But it must be one and the same, you should never change it. According to yoga it is wrong to change your symbol from time to time.

The symbol need not only be a form, it can be a word, a sound. It is said in yoga that there are two important bases for the mind. One is sound and the other is form. Form has three classifications: the gross form, the medium form and the subtle form. Gross form is myself and yourself, medium form is the chakras, Muladhara etc. , or any of the dimensions of form. But you can also base your mind on a particular sound, such as a humming sound or a particular mantra. Now when you say 'Om' you should not remember the word 'Om' as it is written on the blackboard, or on a piece of paper, but you should concentrate on the sound which is 'Om'. How are you going to concentrate on the sound 'Om'? When you concentrate on the sound 'Om' your consciousness attains that function, your consciousness attains that form, and for the time being your consciousness becomes 'Om'. It is of that pattern.

But out of all these the easiest method is to take a form. Take a banana. I am not asking you to concentrate on an apple or a banana but giving you a very gross example. Take an apple. It is in front of you. It is an object outside, different from the mind. Try to visualize that apple. That apple must become clear in your mind. When your mind is trying to visualize that

apple, really your consciousness is trying to formulate itself into the pattern of that apple. The apple does not go inside, your consciousness is seen by you in the form of an apple. Whatsoever you see, on the mental plane that your mind is; you see your own mind in dream, in vision, in meditation or in half meditation. These are the different phases of your mind. Pure mind, impure mind, healthy mind, unhealthy mind, mind ridden with complexes or without complexes, liberated mind or mind in bondage are the visions of the mind that can be had in the sixth step of Raja Yoga. When you have the vision of your mind, you will become a very powerful man, because when it is concentrated this mind becomes will power.

Willpower does not come by just repeating a few suggestions like, "I am very healthy, I am getting better, I am not going to have any disease, I will be truthful, I will speak the truth. " These suggestions are only hypnotic suggestions. They can not help very much. Willpower is the essence of the mind. Once you get this will power you can change not only yourself but many other people. Mind becomes very powerful when it is brought into focus by concentration. If you can definitely concentrate on one particular object and can visualize it, and retain it not only on the conscious plane but on the subconscious plane as clearly as you see it in dream, not only in black and white but also in technicolor, then you are a man of strong will. With that strong will you can get guidance for your life and at the same time you can definitely have a positive influence on other people. Therefore, it is of utmost importance in the sixth step of Raja Yoga which is known as dharana, to conceive a particular form, retain it in the mind and try to see it as clearly as it is outside.

The moment the apple becomes as clear as if it were an apple outside, dhyana begins. The sixth, the seventh and the eighth are not 3 stages but are continuities. Dharana is the sixth, dhyana the seventh and samadhi the eighth. They are conception, meditation and complete samadhi.

Where does dhyana begin and where does samadhi begin? Nobody can say. You take the form, concentrate, forget yourself, visualize the form, it becomes clear and you become one with the object.

So this in short is Raja Yoga. It is a very brief and inadequate introduction to Raja Yoga that I have tried to give. The classical book on Raja yoga is *Raja Yoga Sutra of Patanjali*. Commentaries are given by Swami Vivekananda, by Swami Sivananda and by many other scholars in the west. The best one I have come across is by a great scholar named I. K. Taimni. It is a Theosophical Society publication. It is a marvelous book which you should try to have. It is absolutely modern and in accordance with modern science and it is immediately applicable to your spiritual and material problems. There are other commentaries also, but I have found this to be the best and nearest to my modern approach to this topic.

In Raja yoga the ultimate awareness, the ultimate purpose of Raja Yoga is kaivalya. In Buddhism it is nirvana. But the ultimate aim of a yogi or a Raja yogi is kaivalya. *Kaivalya* means onliness. Not absoluteness but onliness. Now I am two, matter and consciousness. If matter is to be separated from consciousness then we are separating two great principles. If I am successful in separating consciousness and matter from each other that is the state of consciousness only, that is the state of onliness of consciousness. In meditation, in your

spiritual meditation, in Raja Yoga meditation, when you are completely unaware of yourself, the surroundings, past, present and future, you transcend time, transcend space, transcend ego, the individual 'I'. Consciousness must remain without name and form. No name, no form, no attribute, no qualification, no details, but it is there. What is there nobody knows, but it is there in the form of completely homogeneous, absolute non-relative consciousness. If the trace of matter, the trace of time, space and causation is not there, it is the state of kaivalya or oneness. That is the ultimate goal of a yogi when he has surmounted all his mental and psychological problems. This state is definitely a very great one.

Coming to the topic of Hatha Yoga. Hatha Yoga is supplementary to Raja Yoga. Every practitioner of Raja Yoga must practice Hatha Yoga. Hatha is a combination of the two syllables, 'Ha' and 'Tha'. They are symbolic and esoteric. 'Ha' means the sun; 'Tha' means the moon. Yoga means communion. Union between the sun and the moon is Hatha Yoga. That is the literal meaning.

What is the sun and what is the moon? According to yoga the right nostril is sun and the left nostril is moon. The right side is sun and the left side is moon. They are the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. The sympathetic is moon and the parasympathetic is the sun. The moon rules over the mind, over the mental functions in your personality. The sun is the symbol of the vital functions of your personality. Moon is the symbol of the mental functions of your personality, the mental life, the mental man. Sun symbolizes the dynamic personality, the vitality in you. There must be a balance between the two. If mind becomes more

powerful, if the prana has become weak, you have lots of thinking and thinking and thinking and you become cracked. If the prana is in abundance and there is no mental life, if there is no reasoning, then you know what happens. All kinds of disasters take place in society, beatings, and killing and crime and all such things. Because the prana is very powerful, you have become too dynamic without reason, without common sense. So there must be a balance between the two forces in man, the sun force and the moon force, the vital force and the mental force. This can be brought about by the practice of Hatha Yoga. This is its purpose.

We approach this problem of balance through six methods, and these six are called purificatory. They purify the whole system. The first one is called neti, which concerns the nasal orifice. The second method is known as dhauti which concerns the whole of the alimentary canal. The third method is known as basti which concerns the anus and the large intestine, the colon and the fourth method concerns the frontal lobes of the brain and is known as kapalabhati. The fifth method is known as nauli and concerns the rectus abdomini. The sixth method is known as trataka, which concerns the points of concentration in the pineal gland. These are the six methods in Hatha Yoga. Out of these six the most important that should be practiced in daily life is neti, which concerns the nasal passages and prevents cold, cough, allergy, hard breathing, asthma and other such complaints.

Dhauti can also be practiced for curing hyper-acidity and stomach ulcers. The most peculiar practice of dhauti is the dhauti with the help of a cloth. It is the easiest but if I tell you about it, it will appear to you as if it is the most difficult. Especially those people who

are suffering from asthma or similar allergies should practise it. Take a long cloth about two inches wide and about 10 feet long. On the first day swallow one inch, then on the second day a little more. In about a week's time you can take the whole lot inside and then, take it out. You will remember the cloth and forget the asthma, I am sure. - (Laughter) - We have been very successful with this practice that is why I am mentioning it. It seems to be very difficult, but when you do it, it is only a five-minute job. Every day, today this much, tomorrow this much and in about ten days or one week's time, you take everything inside and take it out, and all the time you are aware of the cloth and the asthma is gone. I am not going into details about the technical side as to why it happens and all that but this is very important.

A second practice of dhauti is shankhaprakshalana that is, cleaning the alimentary canal. Shankhaprakshalana means, washing the whole of the alimentary canal with the help of 16 glasses or about 4 seers of brine or salt water. Drink 16 glasses and clean yourself completely. The water you drink is the water you pass, in the toilet of course. But it has to be learned. These are two great systems in Hatha Yoga which will give great relief, especially to the people of the western world who are meat eaters. Completely clean the whole system and you will feel the greatest relief you ever had in your life.

This is the Hatha Yoga system which is supplementary to Raja Yoga. In short I have given you a little idea about Raja Yoga and Hatha Yoga. I know that this is the yoga which the people of the west will like very much and of course, yoga has become popular because of Raja Yoga and Hatha Yoga.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Kundalini Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Belfast, Northern Ireland, March 13, 1971

Blessed self,

You have heard something very important and instructive from Swami Devatmananda. She has been in touch with spiritual life for many years and has spent a considerable time in India also. We have lived together many years ago when our ashram was a small place, not as big as it is at the moment, and we had a lot of difficulties concerning accommodation, teaching and so on. She has given an exact description of Kundalini Yoga. This is the traditional definition; this is the traditional account of kundalini that is acceptable to all people. In all the books on Kundalini Yoga which have been written in Sanskrit and later translated into various languages they have always been talking about this Kundalini Shakti.

However, I have a different concept of kundalini, and you will have to rethink the whole structure of awakening of consciousness and the whole process. I personally feel that the seat of power is in Sahasrara, that is at the top and this is a completely different approach. In all the books except those that have been written by me, the concept of the chakras has been described in the way related by Swami Devatmananda. The power is only one and it can be awakened by awakening the chakras, and the chakras are the receptors. The impulse is carried to the corresponding part of the brain and the brain reacts. Those unconscious and un-awakened

domains of the brain and those circuits start working. A few start working very quickly and some take time. A few work only for a few weeks and months and others work for many years. The psychic powers, the powers of higher intelligence, the astral powers, the black powers, the higher powers and the powers of divine wisdom, they are the different manifestations of Sahasrara chakra.

Each chakra, when it is awakened, operates in a particular sphere. In Sahasrara there are areas that are given to Muladhara, and other areas are respectively given to Swadhisthana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddhi and Ajna. If you awaken Ajna chakra directly, which can be done, and then the experiences pertain to intuition. If you awaken Vishuddhi chakra then the experiences are that you develop a great vitality and the nectar, which is responsible for the physical rejuvenation of the body and the physical cells, starts secretion. If you develop Anahata chakra you develop automatic qualities of painting, poetry and such artistic abilities. These are the faculties that are inherent in the higher centers but they can be awakened by awakening the chakras. This is the gist of Kundalini Yoga on which I have been working for many years.

It is possible for me to tell you in detail, but not at the moment, that if you awaken Muladhara chakra, which is at the basis, at the perineum, what positive and negative qualities can develop in you. It is only beyond Vishuddhi that only positive qualities develop, only positive qualities come to manifestation. Otherwise, whether it is Swadhisthana that is to say the sacral plexus, or Manipura, the solar plexus, or Anahata, the cardiac plexus, there

are both sides, one side will develop clairvoyance; the other side will develop certain black arts. One side may develop the power of telepathy, the other side will develop certain black arts or it may have something to do with your life itself, with the karmas themselves. I have had experiences with many people and also with myself that the awakening of the chakras corresponds with the karma also and each and everyone has their own karma, his own actions, which he has been carrying with him from the remote past. When the awakening takes place, the purging also takes place. The sufferings are great. I am not going to give you a temptation, because many people think that the awakening of kundalini is a matter of jokes. It is a matter of jokes, because the whole thing can be contrived through physical means, and as such, people can manage it.

But, when the purging takes place, then the sufferings are great. These sufferings are actually the cross of the yogi. He is on the cross at that moment, because he has to work out these karmas side by side with the awakening. Unless the karmas are totally worked out, the inner evolution can not take place. The veils have to be rent asunder, and these veils are not the screens which you see, they are the veils that concern your life in the remote past, your own karmas, which have made the personality, and which stand as an impediment to illumination.

Up to Vishuddhi chakra, the awakening is wonderful. You can become a great painter, as I met one of them, who could see a color which he could not realize on paper. He had a vision of a color and he was trying for many years to get it on canvas. I met him in New York. He had certain visions, and he saw this color

which he could not get on canvas, he could not find it, he could not make nor mix it. He said, "I am trying to create that color." I asked, "What is that color?" He replied, "That is the transcendental color." I also met a musician who had heard a note he was trying to bring down to the level of material consciousness. But at the same time I saw with these people also that their sufferings were so great. Therefore, in the process of awakening of kundalini, the process of self-purification must go side by side.

Japa Yoga is a preliminary to Kundalini Yoga. Bhakti Yoga, the yoga of devotion is also a preliminary to Kundalini Yoga because many times I have seen in the east and the west both, people who had awakened their kundalini without purifying themselves and their personal egoism was terrific. They felt themselves to be next to gods now and that they could bless anyone. This part of human personality has to get out. Before they proceed on the path of Kundalini Yoga the preliminaries have to be done; asanas, pranayama, mudras, bandhas, Japa Yoga and then the awakening of kundalini takes place by itself. Remember that though we are ignorant, in *avidya*, each and everybody is at a different level of consciousness. You may start your practices from Muladhara but actually your consciousness has already gone up to Manipura, and in this life you will have to start either from Manipura or any other higher region of consciousness. In past incarnations we must already have done some practices, and the consciousness must have evolved from the lower base, Muladhara, to a higher base.

Therefore, in the practice of Kundalini Yoga we find sometimes that in Muladhara we are unable to work, in Swadhisthana we are unable to work but when we start working in Manipura we feel fine. It is because we

have already passed through these two stages and now your evolution must start from Manipura. We are at different levels of this higher consciousness. This, one has to discover for oneself also.

This in short is a little about Kundalini Yoga.

Now, something about the Belfast Yoga Center. I am very happy to see our center and it has a very nice future. It may not be possible for me to come to Belfast for a very long time because I have so many other institutions to take care of, but I will be present spiritually here. The purpose of this center was to form a nucleus for a very big area so that the great science could be delivered to mankind, to people who are eager to learn.

A few years ago yoga was brought to the west by many people. I used to read about this in the Times and so on, about drinking nitric acid, eating the blades, walking on the fires, and many such things came, and later on then people brought another spark of it, clairvoyance, telepathy, and such things. But a few wise people started to think about the whole affair and brought the very practical science, yoga exercises and the breathing exercises, and that continued for many years. It did help the people in so far as their health was concerned. Many physical ailments, many physical disorders were really cured very nicely. But the Western people, essentially spiritual and mystics were longing to find a way. They wanted to find the ladder with which one climbs to heaven. They only knew for many centuries, as Indians do, to pray and read scriptures. But at the same time the spiritual seekers went on finding a path for themselves and they came to yoga, because they found that in yoga there were no dogmas, there were no restrictions with regard to religion.

Now, they realized that in yoga there are no restrictions at all. Of late they realized that yoga is a part of Tantra and Tantra is nothing but a manifestation of life. We have come to understand that each and every activity in life can be transformed into yogic consciousness. This is a very healthy and psychological approach. In different parts of the world people have a very low opinion about life, about everything in life; there is practically nothing in life that people have respect for. You find in a human being the different manifestations of life which they are compelled to lead are not accepted by them, and that is the agony they are suffering from. The cause of this agony is absolute disrespect and absolute non-acceptance of the way of life.

You are living life and even if you want to change it you can not. How many times have you resolved but you could not and even if you could, you did it at the cost of certain mental values. Therefore, how are you going to live with the life? Are you going to accept the life as it comes to you, or are you going to understand it from a higher spiritual standpoint? Whether it is suffering, whether it is happiness or enjoyment, or as Khalil Gibran said, "The curse of the evil and the good", how are you going to accept them? Are you going to do your best, without any understanding of karma, which of course you are doing? Your judgment about yourself has been wrong all throughout. There is not one aspect of life that you respect but you do it because you are compelled by nature, by *prakriti*.

Now according to the yogic concept, what you want to bring into your life is this, that you understand your own life and transform the whole thing. Each and every activity, each and every action and the attitude towards

life have to be redefined. This redefinition should be the aim of yoga in your personal life.

Now, therefore, yoga does not ask you to change yourself. If yoga asks you to change yourself then it is a religion. Yoga is asking you to redefine yourself and thereby understand that until yesterday, I was very sorry for many of my deeds and unconsciously I was suffering, but consciously I was not, because I thought it was alright. But unconsciously I was suffering and that was affecting my daily behavior, it was affecting my family patterns, it was affecting my social relationships. I did not know why I was angry, I did not know why I frown at you, I did not know why I love you or I hate you. But this morning I happened to understand that it is me, that is all. You called it misery until this morning. But I say it is me. I go with it and it can go with me. Now it can continue with me and I will continue with it. I do not want to renounce it. If mistakes can be renounced from every dimension of man then he will be a *jivanmukta*, a liberated man. You are only putting it back. Instead of putting it on the table you are putting it onto the self. That is what we have been doing, not only in the west but also in the east. All our gurus or teachers have been asking us to take the misdeeds from the mind and keep it in the heart. Take it out from the heart and put it somewhere else and suffer endlessly. So yoga does not ask you to change, you must have a complete adjustment, a thorough adjustment with yourself.

Eighteen years ago when I was on a tour in India, I met a man who had a bad reputation which I knew nothing about myself. I did not read newspapers and he wanted to devote himself to me completely. He brought me to his home and he put down thousands

and thousands of rupees and asked me what he was to do with this. I asked him from where he got it. He said, "I got it at the point of a gun." I told him to put it in the bank and earn interest, but he was afraid that they would arrest him if they recognized him so I said I would do it for him. It was that act that made him my disciple. Up to that time he was a great robber, a dacoit. I used to visit him from time to time and people used to say, either this swami is a robber or this man is going to change. Something is going to change. But nobody had the guts to tell me that he was a robber.

One day he was driving me on his cycle and suddenly he cried out loud and when I asked him what was the matter, he said, "I do not sleep at night" and he exposed to me how he used to do all these criminal things. One day he came to me in the early morning and touched my feet and began to cry and I asked him what he was doing. He said he was repenting, and how he was a sinner and this and that, and I said, "I do not believe in all these things. You are a man who is carrying out his own profession, that is all. The only thing is that you are taking the money at the point of a gun and there are industrialists who are taking the money by means of their intelligence only the mentality is different." He did not understand all these things but I was very careful in telling him these things. He said that from this moment I take an oath that I give up all these things. I said, "Do not do it to me but make this oath before a deity, before a God but not before me. I do not believe that a change can come so quickly. It is only a reaction that is motivating you and now because of my presence and under the influence of my personality, and my

religious and saintly behavior, you are putting all your behavior and karma into the background and I know that this will only delay your spiritual evolution. It is much better that you start practicing yoga, without changing anything".

Of course, he changed completely. He surrendered himself to the police. That was the last thing I said to him that if you believe you are a sinner go and surrender yourself to the police. He had eleven revolvers without a license. He had three to four hundred acres of land which he had obtained at the point of a gun. Now, even such people, even such criminals must have respect for themselves, then only, can they have a little bit of humanity. I am giving you an extreme example. I am not saying anything in favor of crimes and these things because the ultimate purpose is evolution, but the evolution has to take place correctly.

You cannot expect the whole world to come to yoga in one day. You cannot expect that thousands of girls and boys in the universities can become post graduates in just one day. Then the whole evolution would come to a standstill. We are at different stages of evolution, perfect and imperfect both. Those people who are at a higher stage of evolution it is alright for them. This, therefore, is the purpose of yoga that the man evolves, and the change should be natural, and it should be fundamental, and it should be from the very basis without hiding anything from yourself, you do not bury your sins in yourself. This evolution makes you a man, and this man is known as a superman which is the ultimate purpose of yoga and the hope of the future generations.

Hari Om Tat Sat

The third series of seven lectures was given in Copenhagen, Denmark, on the topics of the Psychic Race, Psychic Symbols, Yoga and Renunciation, Yoga and Science, Nada Yoga, Introduction to the Upanishads, Katha Upanishad and Kundalini Yoga.

The first lecture on the Psychic Race makes the point that higher spiritual life is not restricted to the few, but the purpose of yoga is to spiritualize ordinary life. He also indicates that at this time in history there is a universal awakening of the psychic nature of man and hence there is a contemporary need for the practice of yoga with a more adequate understanding of the psychic side of man.

The second lecture on Psychic Symbols above all stresses the importance of psychic symbols in meditation. He introduces three divisions of psychic symbols and the corresponding three stages of consciousness arrived at by means of them. He also warns of the drawbacks of choosing living persons as psychic symbols.

The third lecture on Yoga and Renunciation corrects the misconception that yoga can only be practiced successfully by those who have renounced ordinary worldly life, and boldly asserts that yoga is for everybody, and that we have come to the point in time where yoga should be practiced not just for the individual's benefit but for that of society also. This social application of yoga was to become a major aspect of Satyananda Yoga as it is lived and taught at the Bihar School of Yoga at Ganga Darshan in Munger, and at Rikhia Peeth in Jarkhand.

The fourth lecture on Yoga and Science emphasizes the interaction of the mind and the body as a basis for a scientific understanding of the efficacy of yoga

practices. Positive and negative health are distinguished and yoga is characterized as a positive science of health. The beneficial effects of yoga practices are achieved by means of their influence on the endocrinal or glandular system, as well as on the nervous system, which are the major control systems mediating between the mind and the body. These effects can be scientifically investigated by correlating specific yoga practices with data about the concomitant behaviour of the glandular system, nervous system, brain and body as a whole, using modern techniques such as MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging), etc.

The fifth lecture on Nada Yoga explains the four levels of sound Para, Pashyanti, Madhyama and Vaikhari through which the consciousness of the sadhaka rises due to the practice of Nada Yoga. The practice involves Moolabandha, Vajroli Mudra and Moorchha Pranayama, the last of which should not be practiced without the guidance of an expert in Nada Yoga. In this practice you realize yourself as sound at deeper and deeper levels until you hear the inner voice, the voice of your inner guide or guru, and then you can follow its guidance.

The sixth lecture on Kundalini Yoga begins with a delineation of the chakras and proceeds to explain the three phases of purification of the nadis, the awakening of the nadis and finally the awakening of Kundalini. The latter can be achieved in five ways, by birth, by mantra, by tapas (austerities), by aushadhi (drugs), and by samadhi. He closes by indicating the preparations necessary for each phase and mentions that traditionally the successful practice of Kundalini Yoga required living with one's guru for twelve years.

The seventh lecture on the Bhagavad Gita begins by pointing out that conflict is an attribute of life which you must face and resolve. Difficulties drive evolution. Sri Swamiji remarks that we lead a dual life. All difficulties in the deepest part of the psyche must become known to the yoga aspirant and to overcome them he must practice sadhana. Karma Yoga must be done to transform the sadhak's daily life and make it conducive to spiritual progress and ultimately leading through sadhana to liberation, moksha, in daily life, Jivan Mukti.



Psychic Race

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Copenhagen, Denmark, 1971

Blessed friends,

In this age when the psychic awareness of man has come to clear manifestation we have to clarify a few misunderstandings that crop up in the mind of every individual. During my wanderings in India from 1966 to 1967 and during my wanderings all over the world from 1968 up to this day, I have come to understand and realize that a great change has taken place in the structure of human consciousness. It is not only India or the east but every part of the west which is undergoing a change in the basic structure, and not only the old people, and not only the exploring youth, but also the common man is undergoing a great process of evolution. There used to be a time when our ancestors, our grandfathers, used to feel that the spiritual awareness, the higher awareness, was only confined to a few choice and selected people. They used to feel that the higher awareness, or the awareness of the psyche, or the awareness of the higher spiritual experience, and the path of meditation, and the path of contemplation and yoga was not open to all, and that everyone was not fit for it, that only a few people could handle this great path. But in these few years, the young people, the young generation, as well as, the older generation has witnessed a great change, and that great change has been all too sudden all too surprising to everyone.

In 1936, when I became aware of spiritual life, everyone was laughing at me, and I am really very sorry that there was not one person who could understand whether I was really setting out on the right path. There was not one person who really felt that this youth was setting out on the right path. Whenever I used to practice meditation at night and I was in a hostel, if someone knew that I was sitting cross legged and practicing meditation, they began to feel that there was something wrong with my brain. In fact I was supposed to be going to a mental asylum. There was one boy, he was the son of one of the servants in the hostel, and I used to teach him a few stanzas from *Srimad Bhagavad Gita*. His father came to know and he transferred his son to a remote village because he was afraid that his son would become a yogi. During my wandering in Afghanistan, Burma, Ceylon and many other countries in the east it was so difficult to convince people that there was a higher path apart from religion, there was a higher path, a secular path, apart from religion, a scientific way by which you could have an access to spiritual life. But people never understood it; they thought that it was something that was beyond their language, beyond their comprehension. But in 1968 when I was invited to Australia to attend one of the yoga seminars at a higher secondary school, I was completely surprised to see an army of ten thousand boys and girls attending that seminar on yoga in absolute earnestness, sincerity and total discipline.

In fact, the spiritual life, the life in the higher self, is not restricted to a few people, and it was never so. Everyman is essentially spiritual. He has a higher consciousness which is lying dormant in him, which is

his inherent being. Of course, he has not completely realized it as yet. Religions have always taught us, religions have always instructed us what the realities could be, but man has to search for these himself. Religions can only give you inspirations, religions can only indicate, but they cannot lead you to the path. You can understand everything about your journey by the timetable. But the timetable by itself cannot take you through the land and sea. Every person has different stages of consciousness, and the highest state of consciousness is yet to manifest in his life. He should come to know, he should come to realize this fact. It is true that through the methods of yoga you try to realize different stages of consciousness which are already in you. It is through yoga alone that you can realize different planes of your own existence.

Man does not only exist on the gross plane. He exists of the planes of energy, on those planes which are beyond time and space, and also those which are within time and space, in the relative and also in the absolute. The gross man, the gross personality, the gross body which can be seen through the senses is just one appearance, is just one manifestation of man, and is not the complete man. The latent personality, the mind, the mental personality is not all the personality but is one of the phases of his consciousness. There are other phases of my existence; there are other phases of your existence on which you can definitely exist as you are existing on this plane at this moment. Those planes about which I am talking are not the planes of unconsciousness; they are the planes of higher, subtle and comparatively more perfect consciousness. It is possible for man to exist on many planes and to be conscious on all those planes at the same time. The

limitations and the conditions of man have been such that when he is awake he cannot experience dream, and when he is dreaming he is not aware of sleep, and when he is sleeping he is not aware of dream either. He can only experience one of these at any one time even though he has existed on all three planes at some time.

According to the *Bhagavad Gita* and according to the fundamental philosophy of yoga, it is possible to break these barriers, but we are existing only in one plane, and we are experiencing only one consciousness. It is possible, as the Gita says and also as indicated in yoga, that man can live on higher planes, man can be aware of higher planes, and at the same time he can move in the lower and gross universe. We talk about homogeneous consciousness and partial consciousness. The partial consciousness is that consciousness to which we are attached at this moment on account of our limitations. This is known as the partial, or finite, or the mortal consciousness. This consciousness is mortal because it decays, it dies, and it is not all the same all the time. But, it is possible that man can live on this mortal plane with immortal, unchanging, infinite or homogeneous consciousness.

In the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna is instructing Arjuna and is describing to him the way of existing as a perfect and absolute man, and he reveals the certainty, not the possibility, of a state in life where you can be aware of the higher consciousness, and at the same time you can maintain your existence on this mortal plane. There are many ways, known to the people of east and west, now and also in the past centuries, which can develop the cosmic consciousness in them. But, they did not know how to experience

cosmic consciousness and at the same time live in this mortal consciousness.

There are forms of yoga, there are types of herbs, by which in the past, and even now, people are able to experience a particular mystical state of consciousness. But they have not been able to maintain a balance; they have not been able to maintain a synthesis between the immortal and the mortal. It is only by the practices of yoga, by controlling and disciplining the mind that you can be aware of both these states at the same time. In the practice of yoga, wherever you may begin, when you are trying to withdraw your consciousness from the outer objects, and you are trying to be aware of a pattern of consciousness internally, you are trying to move throughout the different planes of existence. In the practice of yoga, when the teacher gives you the right way, you must remember one thing, that you have to go into the deeper realms of your consciousness, into the deeper and subtler worlds of your consciousness, and experience all of them and at the same time, you must have the ability, you must have the power, you must have the capacity to come down and live in this mortal world. Sri Aurobindo, who is in Pondicerry, one of the greatest philosophers and yogis of our times, said all the time that the consciousness that is to say the mother, the Shakti, or the kundalini, the Shakti of the higher consciousness must ascend.

Firstly, ascending of consciousness is important from the mortal to the immortal, but again, from the highest point of immortality the Shakti has to come back to the mortal plane from where its journey had started. It is not enough if the Shakti ascends and reaches the higher planes of consciousness, and remains there forever. It is essential that the Shakti, that the higher

consciousness, that the great consciousness, which has manifested, now must descend to the plane of mortal consciousness where it must control all the affairs of mortal consciousness, like a strong man, guiding, touching, defending, maintaining the weak man. Therefore, in the practices of yoga, the ascension of consciousness has to be a very controlled event. In the practice of yoga, the ascension must be an event or process which must always be under your control. Therefore, those aspirants that try to go in a headlong way and want to obtain quick results, you must please remember that it will not be possible for them to have control over the lower nature of man. In every step of yoga, in every step of meditation, in every step of the practice, when the comparatively higher state of consciousness is manifested, you must also maintain the connection with the gross life. You should not become detached from life, you should not renounce life, you should not criticize life, and you should not put down any item of life, because it will act against the natural evolution of consciousness.

According to the principle of evolution, one side of man is limited in the mortal plane, and the other side of man is touching the highest consciousness, and that is really what is possible, and that is what should really be done by all of us. Spiritually minded people, and the people who are taking to the spiritual path, they must be very careful in one aspect. They must strive for the highest consciousness attainable and at the same time maintain awareness of the everyday life in this mortal life. The purpose of yoga is to spiritualize ordinary life and not the withdrawal to some plane of the spirit which is remote from ordinary experience.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Psychic Symbols

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Copenhagen, Denmark, 1971

Before I begin this very serious topic I will tell you a story.

Once in a mountainous place there stood a huge ancient tree and in that tree was a very big nest of a crow. Once during the rainy season, it rained for many, many days all throughout the day and night; with great storms and terrible winds and the crow only stayed in his nest. As it happened, one night the tree was completely uprooted by the great storm and began to flow with the stream of the flowing water. When the tree was completely smashed up, the crow remained on one of the branches and kept flowing on throughout the night until the morning dawned and the sunlight shone. Then the crow realized that it was in the midst of a very big sea or ocean. Everywhere, all around the crow was vast ocean water and the crow managed to be on the branch of the broken tree. It did not exactly know which way to find the shores.

Then the crow decided to fly to all of the sides, in all directions to get to any one of the shores and he did. He flew and flew to the east for sometime but could not see the shore. Then the crow thought it might



be that the shore would be nearer if he would fly to the west so he flew to the western side but still did not reach the shore. Then it tried to fly north and south and finally the crow realized that it was tired and could not fly anymore. When the crow's wings were tired, it started to think about a base where it could rest. It could not find a base in the great ocean. There was only the moving water. It remembered the tree branch which it had left. So now instead of searching for the banks of the ocean, it started searching for that lost support, that branch of the tree. After sometime and a lot of effort, fortunately the crow sighted the branch and went back there and had a good basis, a good support and a good rest there for sometime. Then after awhile when the crow was rested it flew to the southern side but while it was flying to that side, it was sure that it would know where the branch was and provided that if he got tired he could sight the branch and come back there for some rest.

This way it went to the west, east, north and south, in different directions to discover the shores of the ocean but it did not lose sight of that insignificant branch of the tree.

Now, this is exactly what every meditator must do in his act or practices of meditation. The thing that you are searching for is abstract, is formless, is limitless, and is beyond time and space, beyond all categories. That you believe and it is so and it should be like that. In order to realize or discover or to know that great being or that great thing you have known exactly what you are going to do in a very systematic and methodical way. The mind, your consciousness is like a crow, like a bird and it is trying to discover the great truth and the greater, the cosmic consciousness. But at the same

time it must have a basis because without a basis the mind will lose its consciousness. The mind will lose its existence after sometime.

It is in this light that yoga has been introducing the philosophy of psychic symbols or a symbol for your psychic consciousness into which you must be able to pattern your mind. The psychic symbol which I will explain briefly is to be understood in three categories or in three sections or three divisions. The psychic symbol means a pattern, a mould into which the consciousness will be able to pattern itself in one particular form.

You know very well that the perception, the external knowledge that you have is only a pattern of your consciousness. Even the knowledge about yoga, knowledge about external things, or knowledge about your friends is nothing but different patterns of your consciousness into which your mind is casting itself. Since the mind is always in a fluid state, like a wave, it has got to be brought into a definite pattern for perception and for purification and therefore in yoga we have three divisions of psychic symbols:

1. the gross,
2. the intermediate, and
3. the subtle.

By gross symbol, I mean the objective symbols, such as the things existing outside in the particular material pattern into which the mind can formulate itself; which the mind could make a subject for dwelling on.

The intermediate psychic symbols are those which are subjective in the form of the psychic centers, or the stars in the mid eyebrow or the sounds in Nada Yoga or the counter influence of *trataka* or the practices of inner silence, *antar mouna*.

The subtle psychic symbols are in the form of finer ideas such as immortality, eternity and such other topics which concern deeper contemplation and deeper reflections.

When you choose one psychic symbol for yourself what happens is that your consciousness, your mind is molded into that pattern and you are able to see that archetype of consciousness. If you maintain a rose or some flower before you, then close your eyes and try to visualize that flower within the frame of your mind,

- there is a moment when you are able to have an imagination of the flower;
- there is a moment when you are able to have an idea of the flower; and
- there is a moment when you are able to have a vision of the flower.

These are the three stages of consciousness which you arrive at. But all these three stages are faint, vague and clear perceptions of your own consciousness by yourself. When you are trying to mold your consciousness around one psychic symbol, your mind is undergoing a state of transformation in its elementary structure, and not only does the transformation in the elementary structure take place but it is also becoming more aware of other dimensions of consciousness which are not known to you at this moment.

When you descend into a basement, on the first step you have light. On the second step there is less light and on the third step there is still less light. In the same way when you practice concentration on a particular symbol then our external consciousness becomes quiet and the internal consciousness is

manifesting. As a result, in the plane of thinking, in the plane of imagination, then in the plane of visualization your mind or your consciousness is becoming clearer to you because you are able to experience your mind itself as pictures. This is how you are progressing towards deeper conditions.

When the mind is distracted then you can think about an object. When the mind is comparatively quiet you can imagine an object but when the mind becomes quiet you can see the object in the mind because then the mind becomes as clear as a mirror. Concentration on the psychic symbol which you have chosen for yourself indicates the condition of your mind. Whether it is distracted, or is getting quiet or is quiet, that is, if you are asked to concentrate on a trident, if your mind is distracted, disturbed, then you can think a lot about the trident but if your mind is getting quieter you can feel or you can imagine that there is a trident somewhere. But if your mind is very quiet and calm you will see flashes of the trident in front of your mind. Exactly when that flash happens in your mind, the trident flashes across your consciousness, it means that your mind is now away from the gross element structure. This is one part about the psychic symbols that I have placed before you.

The second part is when your mind is trying to formulate itself into the pattern of the psychic symbol then it is becoming more aware of the subconscious planes of your own personality. The mind which is capable of visualizing a trident, a sunflower, or its own psychic symbol, that mind is really capable of developing the subconscious mind or witnessing the subconscious influxes and the subconscious forces.

Kindly remember, every man is simultaneously living on many levels of consciousness but unfortunately or fortunately he is only aware of one existence. He is not aware of the existence of the other levels of his consciousness. You and I and all are existing at this moment, not only on this plane where we are talking and thinking, but on other planes also about which we know nothing at this moment. It is this psychic symbol which will at once bring you to that plane of consciousness which is not gross but is very subtle, which is not far from you and in which you have always existed and still are existing. So when you practice concentration on that psychic symbol, it is not only the psychic symbol that comes to your mind. Many visions, other symbols, the forms of your consciousness, deep rooted inhibitions and complexes, repressions and a host of patterns come up that are lying embedded in the deeper recesses of your mind. They come up even as when you pour a gallon of water into a dirty tub, all the dirt that is underneath comes to the surface. That happens to the mind when your mind is following one psychic pattern. The mind is made up of patterns and those patterns are not a few but they are hundreds of thousands; those patterns are completely occupying your consciousness. Those patterns are working, making your consciousness work and those patterns are known as *samskaras* in yoga or the deep rooted impressions.

Therefore, these hundreds and thousands of patterns that are lying not in one layer but in different layers of consciousness become known to you. You come face to face with those patterns and those patterns come to you in the form of dreams, visions,

many pictures and this is how your mind is becoming more intimate with itself and is trying to know itself. In the beginning what you learn about yourself is concerning those things which are not very serious, but in the latter stages you come to know about yourself concerning those things which you do not want to know, which have been deeply suppressed, which have been deeply buried, which you do not like in yourself, which you hate in yourself and it is these complexes, or those patterns of consciousness which come up in the deeper state or depth state of consciousness. That is possible when you are trying to follow the psychic symbol.

At any cost it is said, "You follow the psychic symbol, other things will come up, do not worry about them, do not loose hold of that psychic symbol or else you will be lost like that crow, remember, you will be lost like that crow in that infinite ocean of consciousness. Hold on to that psychic symbol, to that central point and other images from the depth of your consciousness will emerge, will come up, they will manifest but at no rate, at no cost, at no time should you leave that psychic symbol. It should always be in front of your mind and it should be your most important duty that every time the mind slips away from the center, bring it back again to the same point."

Then after enduring practice for months and years when your consciousness begins to express the unconscious part, not the subconscious, but when it starts manifesting the unconscious part or when you enter into unconscious that is the most difficult region, that is the most difficult land because nothing can penetrate through that land of unconscious and it is at that moment that the

psychic symbol comes to your rescue. When your consciousness has become free from the external experiences it is at that time that you know nothing that is happening to you. If the psychic symbol is present before you it can carry you through the unconscious regions of consciousness.

So therefore, each and every yoga aspirant must have one central psychic symbol for himself. You may practice any sadhana, you may practice any aspect of spiritual or yogic life, it matters little but the psychic symbol should not change; because if it is changed, then the whole traffic system will have to be changed. Then the whole management of the mind has to undergo a change and that is really a very difficult job.

There are hundreds of thousands of psychic symbols and one has to pick out for oneself the psychic symbol which is a part of and not far from one's nature.

The mantras as the sound can make a psychic symbol. The mantra as form can make a psychic symbol. The psychic centers in the body can make very good psychic symbols. The mandalas or the yantras in the Tantric system can make very effective psychic symbols. Many times I have come to the conclusion that in the unconscious mind, there are some very mysterious geometrical symbols and exactly these are the triangles, quadrangles and other yantras which you find in the Tantric Yoga system. Thus there are the mantras in form, the mantras in sound, the chakras, the yantras and the mandalas. All make very good psychic symbols.

There is the tradition in the east and west to make a human being a psychic symbol. Certain sects believe that it is the person who is no more, that

is, who is dead, who should be made the psychic symbol and others feel that it is not the person that is no more but it is the person who is living that should be the psychic symbol. Others believe an enlightened one should become the psychic symbol. In addition to this then, there are the forms of Gods, Goddesses, angels, oracles and maybe spirits and ghosts also who can constitute psychic symbols. I think in order to formulate your consciousness into the right pattern a person who is living should not be the psychic symbol. It may be because I always feel, right from the beginning, that my personality is my personality and I do not want any living man to come into my subconscious mind and much less into my unconscious mind. I want to remain uninterrupted and undisturbed in the deeper parts of my personality and therefore, in the yoga system, you may accept all the patterns that are suggested except a living person. Up to now I have seen aspirants who have undergone great frustrations in life and in their spiritual life. I have got a record of them. It is only those people who have made a living being like myself the symbol that have been frustrated. It is only they that have been frustrated.

Except for this it is alright if you have a person that is no more as your psychic symbol because it is certain that you are not going to get frustrated and disappointed. But the most successful symbols have been the symbols of Tantra. They have pervaded all over the world. In China, Japan, Mexico, South America, North America, Celtic civilizations, the mystics of Christianity, in the mystics in Sufism, in the Kabala, in Egypt; not only now, but right from the days of the Atlantis civilization, thousands and thousands

of years ago, they have survived and they seem to be so powerful that sometimes it is very difficult to explain them on logical grounds. It is those symbols which I think are the most proper symbols for each and everybody.

Apart from this, the symbol of sound that I am talking about, the most important and the most significant symbol is the sound that is OM, and the form of OM. That is because the form and the sound include the entire structure of nature, Prakriti, the three gunas as the three natures.

This in short is a brief discussion of the psychic symbols which are very important in the scheme of yoga. Even if you practice yoga for your mental well being, physical well being and even more so if you practice yoga for your spiritual realization, trying to span the great ocean of life, I think you have to take care of the psychic symbols. They must be completely in accordance with the law of the psyche, not in accordance with the law of your emotions. No! Emotions can not decide the psychic symbol. It is the psyche which has to decide the psychic symbol because the symbol which you have to choose for yourself must fit into your psyche and not fit into your emotions. If you love me it is okay. I can not be your psychic symbol. If I love you it is alright but you can not be my psychic symbol. This psychic symbol has got to be the occult or the esoteric symbol.

If you care to read more about them in the Tantric books or in the books of eastern and western occultism then you will know more about those figures, the yantras, the mantras, the mandalas and so on.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Yoga and Renunciation

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Copenhagen, Denmark, 1971

We have to come to the point that yoga is to be practiced with the society, for the society and in the society.

Satyananda Paramahansa

Blessed spiritual seekers,
Hari Om Tat Sat

I want to give you a very encouraging and inspiring message concerning your personal belief on the nature of yoga. One thought has been reigning in the minds of people for centuries and centuries, namely, whether yoga can be practiced by everybody, whether everybody was entitled or qualified to practice yoga or was there any kind of indication concerning its practices. This age old question has got to be decided now in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

The great scientist Galileo spoke the truth and he was punished for it, but he spoke the truth as we know today. When the great personality Christ spoke the truth, not only a few people, but the nation or the race or the tribe as a whole got offended, but he spoke the truth as we know today. When the great Akhbar spoke the truth he was condemned to death, but we know that he also spoke the truth. In the same way, in the

past, whatever might have been the obstructions, the limitations and the taboos, as established by the people of old, today the truth has to be retold, the whole truth has to be reaffirmed.

In 1942, when I left my home in order to practice yoga, I first went to one Swami in Rishikesh and asked him whether he could teach me yoga. He told me that I was too young for it. I was only twenty, just out of the University, and he said that I was too young and that my age did not qualify me for learning yoga and so I did not learn yoga from him.

Due to my good fortune, I met a good man, his name was Swami Sivananda. When I went to learn yoga from him, he accepted me, he did not ask me anything about my qualifications, did not question me about my age, nor did he enquire about my habits, he did not even care what my reflexes were, and he started to teach me yoga on the same day that I arrived at the ashram. It is with that man that I lived for a full twelve years, with faith and confidence, like a baby lives with a kind and compassionate mother.

This whole question about the qualifications for practicing yoga has got to be settled. I can tell you that there is no one who is unqualified for the practice of yoga. Everybody is born for yoga, and everybody is living in one way or the other the yoga life. On the path of Hatha Yoga, or the path of Karma Yoga, or the path of Bhakti Yoga or Raja Yoga or any path of yoga you may take, you do not have to make any changes in your life. If you do, you are doing something against the nature of your own psyche, against the laws of your own mind, against the laws of nature and you will have to pay for it in due course; and then generations and the nations are in chaos.

There is no man on the face of the earth who is not seeking knowledge and there is no man on earth who does not like peace of mind. There is not one man on the face of the earth who does not like tranquility, and this truth is what everyone is seeking in the life of yoga. Every man is sick. Every man is ailing, physically, mentally and also spiritually. This sick man has to be treated by himself. How can you expect from this sick man those qualifications and those great attributes or characteristics which we superimpose on the great saints and great mahatmas? As the modern and the ancient medical sciences aim at curing the physical ailments of mankind, therefore, all patients, all sufferers are welcome in hospitals while they are coughing, sneezing, screaming, with smelly bodies, they might be invalids, they might be unconscious. Hospitals do not require qualifications; they do not specify any preconditions for the sick man. In the same way there should be no precondition to the practice of yoga if you want man to become free from suffering.

In India, I treat patients suffering from mental, as well as, physical problems through yoga, and when they come to me they come with horrible habits, with horrible diseases, with very dangerous ways of thinking. But when they come to me the first thing they ask is, "Swamiji, what should I do and what should I not do?" I give them only one reply, "You have come here to get rid of your disease, you have come here to get rid of your suffering, and you have not come here to learn a religion from me. I am going to give you a way to achieve a healthy life if you wish you may remain here." Those people remain with me for sometime. I give them perfect freedom for the expression of their

unhealthy habits also, but at the same time I tell them do one thing which is possible in your life and that is the practice of yoga.

Tyag, renunciation, is not a part of yoga. Renunciation is a part of religion. Abstention is not a part of yoga. It is part of your religious life; they are part of your spiritual life. But there are many problems in your life, in your physical and mental life, which you have to cure through the secular and scientific practices of yoga.

When you want to take to any practice of yoga you must first understand what you have to know concerning the practice. You have to concern yourself more with the technicalities of the practice rather than the religious background, rather than confusing yourself with what we call the question or the problem of qualification. If you take into consideration all the rules you have been hearing concerning the practice of yoga, all the qualifications that you are supposed to fulfill before you take to the practice of yoga, then I can assure you that there is no one in this assembly here who can practice it; not even myself. Not even among the teachers who will be coming to your country in the future, or have come in the past, there is not one person who can fulfill all the conditions and qualifications often stated for the practice of yoga. They are ideal, they are not reality.

Even renunciation of personal belongings, renunciation of clothes, abstention from certain diets, refraining oneself from very many things, does not make one free from suffering. Rather, they add to human suffering, internal, as well as, external. Please remember this. That is why mankind today is sick. The yamas and niyamas, the course of disciplines

is good and beautiful. They sound so beautiful and so good but kindly remember, it is only these great disciplines which have been imposed on us by our ancestors for many centuries that are responsible for the sudden breakdown in this century. Religious discipline or spiritual discipline is an absolute injustice to the individual mind and the mind does not like it. It may accept it. It may follow the discipline, it may be obedient but it does not like it and a time comes when it comes out in the form of great repressions and that affects the society, the family and our whole life.

I have met many individuals in the east and west during my itineraries and I found that at the moment people take to the life of yoga they become so dry, they become so rigid, they become so stiff, and they become unkind and unsympathetic, to everything in life, so that their family life is broken into pieces. The wife becomes unsatisfied, children are completely neglected. Or the wife becomes a yoga practitioner and the husband becomes almost as a man trapped in the family, nobody belongs to him and that is how the structure of the family breaks into pieces because of the wrong concepts about yoga.

A lady came to me many years ago and she learned yoga from me, a few postures and a little meditation. But after a few months her husband came to me and asked me, "Swamiji, what have you taught to my wife?" I said, "Nothing, just yoga postures and a little bit of concentration, nothing else. I have not given her any interferences in her life." He said, "Since the day she started yoga she refuses to cook meat and I like meat. This is your problem also. I like meat and the moment she came from your ashram, she has stopped cooking meat, and I have problems, I have to go to a hotel

which is very expensive. Then I get my mother in law or some in law to cook the meat and in order to cook the meat she has to do it in the garden". Now, this is where yoga which should unite has broken the family. Instead of union it produced a separation. I talked to the lady and discovered that she had dramatized the whole affair. She thought that the moment you practice yoga you have to become a vegetarian and many other things. I told her please do not make all these mistakes when I have not told you anything of the kind. You came to me because you have gastric problems. I gave you a little bit of concentration and a few yoga postures. You should have gone back to your family and continued your old life. Anyway, it took me some time to convince that lady that she was not supposed to follow all those unnecessary, unwanted, useless and disastrous disciplines.

So, coming to the point, everybody is fit for yoga. The moment you start yoga, please do not impose self imagined religious disciplines on yourself because it is egoistic, and feeds your own ego by supposing you are someone special or you are someone different, or you are someone new, or above the rest of the crowd.

Purify the nervous system and regulate the endocrinal system, the respiratory system, the circulatory system, the excretory system, as far as the physical body is concerned. But at the same time when you go through the path of concentration and meditation, it helps you

to know your mind, to know your feelings, to know the different patterns of your consciousness through symbols, through visions, through feelings and so on.

As such, yoga has to be learned technically as a science and not as a religion. So with regard to yoga,

first of all make it free from religious domination. Then you should know the next step which is how to practice it and why to practice it. This is the best way. Start the practice of yoga with Hatha Yoga, and continue with this for an extended time, without thinking anything against it. Without trying to impose your idea on the practice that Hatha Yoga is physical. No! Hatha Yoga is not physical. Try to concentrate your mind, and when you have been very successful in concentrating your mind and fusing your mental tendencies to one point, you will have to face the difficulties concerning the body, concerning the posture, about the asana, about the state of the body, when you close your eyes and contemplate and concentrate for about one or two or more hours. It is the body which should be trained first. And it is not only the asanas, it is not only the physical postures, it is also the pranayama, the mudras, the bandhas and other Hatha yogic kriyas. The six kriyas of Hatha Yoga, which will not only purify your body, they will also make your body subtle, light and full of tranquility, so that in that body you would be able to sit undisturbed for a few hours for your concentration and for your contemplation.

The six systems of Hatha Yoga are important for every yoga practitioner, even if he does not want it, he needs it, because the body has to be purified internally, as well as, externally. It is said in Hatha Yoga that the imbalances between the two nervous systems are responsible for all the mental problems. That is to say, the imbalance between the actions of the sympathetic and the parasympathetic nervous systems is responsible for man's psychological, as well as, physical indiscipline. Hatha Yoga maintains that there are two important nadis, that is to say

nerve channels, and they are Ida and Pingala, the moon channel and the solar channel. In the modern medical system we call them the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems.

The word Hatha is composed of two mantras, or two syllables, or two sounds, Ha and Tha. Ha symbolically stands for the sun, and Tha symbolically stands for the moon. Ha and Tha mean sun and moon, solar and lunar. Yoga means union. Therefore, Hatha Yoga means union, balance or harmony between the lunar and solar systems in the body. Please remember that moon stands for the psychic personality and sun stands for the pranic energy or vitality. These are two components of this personality, this human being. They are the pranic or the vital nature made out of prana or the Shakti, and the psychic nature made out of the mind and the mind stuff. When there is harmony, or when there is yoga between the psychic nature and the pranic body, then the third personality or nature of man manifests. That is known as the knowledge body, the body which belongs to higher awareness, super consciousness or the intuitive nature. When the sympathetic system is inhibited and the parasympathetic system is stimulated, the pranas are predominant and the individual becomes physically dynamic, powerful, energetic, full of vigor and vitality, and like a strong and robust man, he keeps on roaming here and there. Such a man is one of parasympathetic stimulation. He is suryalized, his solar channel is functioning predominantly.

When the sympathetic nervous system is stimulated and the parasympathetic system is inhibited, then one becomes very psychic, full of thinking, full of reasoning, full of mental activity without physical activity. By the

practices of Hatha Yoga we are trying to bring about a balance between the activities of these two nervous systems so that there should not be any kind of nervous imbalance in the body.

On the basis of this background we then begin our concentration, or one-pointedness, or meditation as you may call it. You may meditate; you may concentrate for many years without any success. But once you are able to bring about a balance or harmony between these two nervous systems, meditation becomes spontaneous. You just close your eyes and you go in, you are one with your own self, without any difficulty. Most of the mental problems of man can be treated on the basis of Hatha Yoga before going in for psychological treatment. Many of the psychological problems, many of the mental confusions, many of the psychological deliriums in the life of man are due to the imbalance in the nervous system and in the endocrinal secretions and also due to faulty chemistry in the brain. So in my opinion, one has to know about three systems concerning yoga. First, you must know about the yoga postures. Then you should also know about the breathing system, pranayama and the third thing you must know is about concentration. If you know something about these three then you are fit enough to practice yoga, and to lead the yogic life, and you do not need any more qualifications.

You should completely rid yourself of the idea that yoga has to be practiced by beings outside of society. No! We have to come to the point that yoga is to be practiced with the society, for the society and in the society.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Yoga and Science

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Copenhagen, Denmark, March, 1971

Blessed spiritual friends,

This evening I would like to talk about the benefits of the yoga system to human life in the light of science. Yoga is not just a philosophy, it is a science. Therefore, the science of yoga is the science of positive health. There are two sources of health, and there are two forms of health, one is called negative health and the other is called positive health. Negative health is not enduring, which you get by resources, but positive health is enduring and is born from you. When you get yourself healthy by food and by medicine that is known as negative health but the yoga system evolves a process of positive health by reviving the prana, the vitality, and health giving resources inside the body itself.

The practice of the physical side of yoga, that is to say, Hatha Yoga is not only physical but it is also known as psychosomatic. By psychosomatic we mean a system which includes the body and also the mind. The practices of yoga improve the condition of the body through the conditions of the mind, and they improve the conditions of the mind through the conditions of the body. All of you know that there is an interaction between the physical and the mental personality of man. Though the body and the mind are considered as two elements in the personality, they are so mingled, so integrated, that it is very

difficult to separate them. When the body is affected, that affects the mind, and if the mind is affected, that affects the body also.

This is true and has both a negative and a positive aspect. I mean to say, that when the body is positively affected the mind is also positively affected; and when the mind is positively affected, the body is also affected positively. If the mind is positively affected you cannot say that it is the mind that is affected and not the body. It is not possible. In the same way, a diseased body, and unhealthy body, the ailing body has immediate influence and bearing on the mind also. As such, the yoga system aims at bringing about a completely healthy relation in both spheres of your personality.

Through the practices of yoga postures, that is to say, yoga asanas, you are not only doing a few exercises. You are influencing the deeper activities, the subtler activities, of your body, in the nervous system and also in the endocrinal system. I am sure that you are aware of the fact that the endocrinal system, the glandular system, is a very important part of the human body, and the glands have a major role in the upkeep and maintenance of the body. The different glands, such as the pituitary, pineal, thymus, thyroid, parathyroid, pancreas, adrenals and sex glands, and many other glands, have a major influence on the processes, the evolution and the growth of the human body and the mind. The glands which I just mentioned are situated in the physical body in different places from the head down to the waist. They secrete very small quantities of fluid and introduce the same into the body, which produces hormones. Now, when there is a fault in the glandular

system, that affects both the physical and mental health; it affects thoughts and emotions also.

For example, the pancreatic gland, situated at the bottom of the stomach, secretes insulin which filters sugar and makes the kidney, as well as, the bloodstream free of sugar. Now if your pancreatic gland is not functioning properly and if they are not giving you insulin, you will be suffering from diabetes and that is the physical disease. But in addition to that physical disease, the diminution of the insulin secretion will also interfere with your emotions, with your thoughts, and with your mental behavior. The same is true for the other glands. Now, in the practice of yoga we are always very careful, particularly concerning this point, and therefore different yoga postures are intended to control to regulate, to revive, this endocrinal system. Not only the physical diseases but also the emotions, in the form of complexes etc. are caused by faulty endocrinal secretions. The hypertension that ultimately cause high blood pressure and the great frustrations in life that can even lead you to suicide, and the resentful nature which is responsible for your differences with your youngsters, with your wife, with your husband, with your parents, can be traced to faulty endocrinal behavior and systems.

The pituitary gland at the top of the head is the master gland. It is very important since it controls all the glands of the body and hence it is known as the master gland. If the pituitary is kept healthy and pure, it can check your emotions, at least the wrong ones. This is why in the yoga system, the yoga postures have to be practiced for a long time, that is to say, for a greater duration. The practice of *sarvangasana*, the

shoulder stand pose, has an immediate influence on the thyroid gland as does *halasana*, the plow pose. *Shashankasana* has an influence on the adrenal glands. *Shirshasana*, the head stand pose, has an influence on the pituitary gland. *Pachimotanasana*, the posterior stretching pose, and *Dhanurasana*, the bow pose and *Kurmasana* the tortoise pose have an immediate influence on the pancreatic gland. This is only a glimpse into the influence of the yoga system on your body.

Departing for the time being from the topic of glands let me consider the nervous systems. These glands are controlled, regulated, suppressed, inhibited and stimulated by the nervous systems. All of you know about the sympathetic nervous system and the parasympathetic nervous system. When these nervous systems are not in balance mental problems crop up. Now this is a very important point and I hope you remember it all of your life. The parasympathetic nervous system is the activity side or the dynamism side of man, that is to say, vitality. At the moment when I am talking it is predominantly the parasympathetic nervous system that is working in me. When you are listening to me and trying to understand what I am saying it is the sympathetic nervous system which is more at work. The sympathetic nervous system is responsible for the thinking process, reasoning, understanding, remembering and all the mental processes.

When the sympathetic system is inhibited, suppressed, and the parasympathetic system is stimulated, then man becomes very strong, vigorous, full of vitality and active. When the sympathetic nervous system is stimulated and the parasympathetic nervous

system is suppressed then man becomes calm and quiet but he thinks too much. Now, this is the problem of man. Either you are thinking without action or you are acting without reason, without thinking. Now, when you act without thinking you may do anything, you may murder a man, you can kill anybody, you can abuse your wife and children, or you can do any thing that is not good for you, because you have the power, you have the Shakti, you have the vitality, but you have no brain.

On the other hand, if you have a lot of power of thinking, that is to say the sympathetic nervous system is working, you think, all the time in different ways but you have no power to act, you have not vitality, you have no Shakti and you become neurotic. You become introvert, you become lazy, you become indolent, and ultimately you face a complex, frustration. These two nervous systems are known in yoga as *Ida* and *Pingala*. They are also known as the moon and the sun, the cold nadi and the hot nadi. By the practice of pranayama we try to render both the nervous systems steady and one-pointed.

When both the nadis, *Ida* and *Pingala*, that is to say, sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems are working in balance, then the central nervous system, *Sushumna* is awake. Then one becomes calm and quiet and is full of wisdom, good thoughts and success. In the practice of pranayama, when you breathe in, and when you breathe out, and when you retain the breath, that is influencing your nervous system. Retention of breath, withholding the breath is a very important part of pranayama. If you can hold or retain your breath for an appropriate duration the mind becomes calm and quiet automatically. When

the nervous system is still and the endocrine system is under control, man can enjoy very good physical and mental health.

Therefore, in the yoga practices, the asanas, yoga postures and pranayama are considered to be very important. In addition to this, on the physical side of Hatha Yoga, there are two more items which are known as *mudras* and *bandhas*. These *mudras*, gestures, and *bandhas*, the locks, they control the emotional inflections, such as for example, the *mulabandha*, which is the contraction of the muscles in the perineum, or *uddayanabandha* which is the contraction of the muscles of the abdomen, that indirectly brings about an effect on the higher centers of the brain through the nervous system. It is not only the physical side of yoga but also mediation or concentration which is very important. Concentration is a very practical science. All the mental problems creep in only when the mind is not concentrated and is not steady. If our mind is balanced, is one-pointed, one can be immediately understood because one's mind is perfectly healthy. Therefore, it is said that one should try to concentrate one's mind on one point for a certain period. Concentration causes the waves in the brain to run or to move in the right direction. It will not be possible to tell you the technical details of the experiments made by the scientists on concentration, but I can tell you something.

When concentration takes place, the waves in the brain become almost double and they become very powerful. The dissipation of energy, the wastage of energy is stopped. Even as you concentrate the rays of the sun with the help of a magnifying glass, and make the ray very powerful by means of this concentration,

in the same way, the brain waves, alpha, beta, gamma, etc, are amplified, are magnified, and they become very powerful through the practice of concentration, and this has been observed.

Those people who want to lead a spiritual life, those people who want to know who they are, and what their real personality is, for them also meditation or the practice of Jnana Yoga is a very useful science. But if you are not keen to know about yourself, if you only wish to see that your mind is powerful, that your thoughts are powerful, your will power is powerful, your decisions are powerful, then concentration comes first. The practice of concentration is very simple, you can concentrate on the breath, you can concentrate on a word, you can concentrate on an inner point, and you can concentrate on anything inside and outside the body, in the mind and outside the mind.

So, I have spoken to you on three different topics. I talked to you about the postures, about the breathing and about one-pointedness, and these three practices cover the entire range of your personality. The human being, you and I, is not only the physical body. We are also not only the mind. Really speaking, what is mind? It is a bundle, or it is a collection of actions, reactions, emotions, love, hatred, thoughts, counter thoughts, etc. We people take care of the body and its organs but we do not take care of the mind and its components. The body is physical and the mind is psychic. The sum-total of different organs in the body is known as body. The sum-total of the psychic experiences, the sum-total of the psychic actions and reactions we know as mind. We have been told that the people of our time pay too much attention to the body. Certainly we are aware of

the body, we take care of the body, we give comfort to the body, we are attached to the body but we are not aware of the mind.

Mind is as real as the body. The only difference is that you see the body and you do not see the mind. But if you see the mind, sometimes, you will be terrified; you will see how sick the mind is, how unhealthy the mind is, and how rotten the mind has become. When you look at a group of one or two hundred people with good bodies wearing nice clothes, if you try to see their mental bodies, if you try to see their minds you will find that most of them are mentally sick. This mental sickness is the root cause of mental agony and mental reactions. But the problem is how to see the mind and how to hold the mind, how to control the mind? If this mind were like a motor car I would put on the brakes. If the mind were like an electric bulb I would turn off the switch. But the mind is abstract, it is not concrete, it is abstract, it is not gross. But by the practice of yoga you can see the mind, you can definitely feel the mind, you can definitely handle the mind, you can definitely know the mind. Even as the scientists have seen the radio active waves, and the language of mathematics and many other things which we do not see with the naked eye, in the same way, by the practice of yoga, all of you will be able to see the mind, just like a scientist, the mind can be realized in symbols.

Dream is a symbol. What you see in meditation that is a symbol. You love certain forms of art, music and many other things and they are also symbols. You love certain things and you hate certain things, which is also a symbol. This mind should be known through the symbols.

In concentration, when we have become one-pointed, fixed on one point, there are certain kinds of figures that come up during meditation, and that is the mind. When you try to concentrate your mind on one point, you come across a lot of feelings, a lot of visions, a lot of experiences, experienced from time to time and day after day. That is an expression of your mind, a manifestation of your mind, and it is through that that you know your mind. Therefore, concentration is very important in order to help you know your own mind.

Before I conclude my talk this evening, I can tell you very frankly; that if you take less care of the body and you take great care of your mind, you will be the happiest person in the world no matter what happens to you in life. It is definitely important for you to know that the requirements of the body are few but the requirements of the mind are a lot. The requirements of the body are physical and the requirements of the mind are non-physical. If you are keen to fulfill the requirements of your own mind, then the first thing is concentration.

So, in yoga, you have a perfect scheme of physical and mental welfare. After you have taken care of your body and taken care of your mind also, then you should proceed to spiritual discovery and spiritual realization. There are many sick souls that are going in after God. There are many sick souls that are going in for self-realization. There are many sick souls that are going in for cosmic expansion by means of LSD, ganja, hashish, etc. But this sickness of mind and sickness of body has to be cured first and then you can go further.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Nada Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Copenhagen, Denmark, March, 1971

Blessed spiritual seekers

Hari Om Tat Sat

This evening it comes to my mind that something should be said about a very important aspect of yoga called Nada Yoga. Nada Yoga is a system in which the spiritual aspirants try to attain union with their own selves through the medium of sound. In fact, Nada Yoga is one of the great systems of Tantra. You can say that Nada Yoga is an offshoot of Tantra Yoga. In Tantric philosophy sound is conceived as manifesting in four dimensions. Starting from the top there is:

1. the transcendental sound,
2. then the visualized sound,
3. then the mental sound and
4. then the gross sound.

Gross sound is the grossest manifestation of the transcendental one. We are aware of the gross sound and we hear it every day. We are also aware of the mental sound which we can invoke by a kind of mental effort. The visualized sound is the astral or etheric sound. Beyond that is the transcendental sound which can be equated, or said to be identical with Brahman, the supreme consciousness. The transcendental sound and the transcendental consciousness are synonymous. The ultimate consciousness is conceived as sound. It is said in the Upanishads and the Vedas that in the beginning there was nothing, there was a complete void, there was

complete non-existence of everything, but there was a sound. That sound was infinite and that sound was the only existing reality. Out of that sound the universe was created, and therefore, the ultimate structure of the whole universe, the fundamental structure of the universe is nada or sound. In fact, this gross universe, this gross mind, the gross vision of man, can be reduced to an ultimate structure which is sound, or which is nada.

Nada Yoga is a sadhana by itself. To become aware of the sounds that do not belong to the gross dimensions is the purpose of Nada Yoga. Even as you practice Japa Yoga, Mantra Yoga or other forms of yoga in order to create the fission of consciousness, or to separate matter from consciousness, Nada Yoga is also one of the kinds of yoga.

The practice of Nada Yoga consists of certain mudras and certain bandhas and a few pranayamas which I will describe very briefly. The first of the practices of Nada Yoga is the practice of Mulabandha which is known to most of the Hatha Yoga aspirants. Another kriya, which is very useful for the awakening of the *nadas*, the sounds, is Vajroli mudra, which is also known to the Hatha Yoga aspirants. However, there is something I have to tell you by way of explanation. In all the books on Hatha Yoga we find that mulabandha is the contraction of the anus. But according to Tantra, according to technical yoga, the contraction of the perineum is mulabandha. This you have to understand very clearly. The contraction of the sphincter muscle or the muscle of the anus is mulabandha as understood by a beginner in Hatha Yoga. But according to Tantra Yoga or the academic science of yoga, mulabandha is the contraction of the perineum, which is the seat of kundalini, which is also known as Muladhara chakra. It is that particular area

which is to be contracted and it happens to be between the excretory and the urinary systems. So mulabandha in Nada Yoga means contraction of the perineum and not the contraction of the anus.

Vajroli is a kriya which is also mentioned in the texts of Hatha Yoga. There are different forms of Vajroli and I am not going into these at the moment. The contraction of the abdominal viscera which involve the whole urinary complex and also the sex glands is called Vajroli. It involves two important nerve channels and by contracting the urinary complex and the sex glands by Vajroli, the energy is transmuted into "fire", and this transmutation takes place by itself, and the seat of Muladhara is the point of origination of nada. The seat of nada is Muladhara chakra, and when this Muladhara chakra is heated up then the sound is felt, the sound is experienced by the aspirant.

In this context you must also remember the diagram of Kundalini Yoga which depicts the different chakras containing their bija mantras, lam, vam, ram, yam, ham and om and the lotuses of four petals, six petals, ten petals, twelve petals, sixteen petals, two petals and one thousand petals, which are supposed to be the psychic centers in the body, situated in the internal wall of the spinal column, right up to the top of the brain. These lotuses, which include certain esoteric sounds, indicate that these particular centers are the original location of these particular sounds. So when you practice Mulabandha and Vajroli, then you have to add one more pranayama which is known as moorcha pranayama. This moorcha pranayama should be added, but it should not be taken up by a beginner. One must reach it step by step through other pranayamas and only then should come to moorcha. Now you are ready for Nada Yoga.

You take a very high pillow and sit on that. Place your elbows on your knees and plug your ears either with the index fingers or the middle fingers. Plug them softly and retain your awareness. Withdraw your awareness inside to any point, but the best is at Bindu. Bindu is the cranial plexus. It is above the pineal gland, it is above the Ajna chakra, and it is also above Sahasrara chakra or the pituitary body. It is a part of the entire cranial body which controls the whole optic system. Bindu is at the same place where the Brahmins in India have a tuft of hair. It is at this particular point of Bindu where you have to concentrate after plugging your ears and the center of Bindu is where the sound descends from the transcendental plane to the next plane, where you can perceive it as an astral sound. Now, you happen to come across one sound, such as the sound of a humming bee, or it may be the sound of birds, or it may be the sound of some musical instrument, the sound of a harp or a flute. You have to go on practicing awareness of any sound that happens to come to you.

The first sound that you may have accidentally discovered let that be the point of beginning, the first end of the thread. You hold onto this first sound as much as you can and as closely and intimately as you can. If the sound is experienced in the point of Bindu, then you must try to feel it as clearly and as intimately as possible. While you are trying to be intimate and close to the sound you will see that a further sound is emerging from the background. When a new sound emerges from the background, at that moment, you leave the first sound and concentrate on the next one very attentively, so much so that you have a clear conception of that sound, and not only that, but you are trying to be intimate, closer to that sound. When that

happens, you will find that a third sound is emerging. In this way you will have to follow a fourth, fifth, sixth, etc. sound which emerges like from the depth of an ocean.

In the beginning you practice Nada Yoga with the ears plugged, but after some time, when you have picked up a few sounds for yourself, and have had an intimate experience of these sounds, then you should not plug your ears, nor should you sit over the hard pillow. Just assume one asana, which is called siddhasana, the posture of the adept. This asana consists of pressing the perineum with one heel, and pressing the viscera with the upper heel and then interlock the toes between the calf muscles and thighs. Remain in jnana mudra by maintaining the index finger at the root of the thumb and the rest of the fingers separate but together. That symbolizes yoga, that is, two together and three separate. The three gunas, sattwa, rajas and tamas separated and the jivatma or the lower self being united with the higher self. This is the symbol of yoga. Remain in that posture; concentrate on Bindu, but without plugging the ears. If it is not possible to achieve this at a particular time, such as 9, 10 or 11 o'clock at night, then get up about 2 or 3 o'clock, wash yourself if possible, sit down properly, you will find that regularly you will get something.

Once you get a sound it is easy to get further. Of course, in the beginning there are difficulties, there are distractions because our minds contain so many samskaras, we are committed to so many things as you know very well. There are many distractions, I completely agree, but sometimes in your sadhana you will succeed, and sometimes it is useless. The Nada Yoga sadhana ultimately develops a sound which is known in yoga as Anahata nada, the unbroken sound. You may say the sound which is in absolute continuity. It has

no beginning and no end. In the ultimate structure of your sadhana, in the ultimate phase of your sadhana, you will experience that the whole body and the whole mind and the whole personality is nothing but a fast moving vibration, a fast moving sound vibration, and you will realize yourself as sound.

This Nada Yoga is a great sadhana, a great spiritual practice. In India there are many people, even now of course, in the villages who have perfected this sadhana. Some of the people in the villages who are really quite ignorant believe that a person has controlled a ghost, a ghost who hears in the ears, a hearing ghost. Actually, it is the expression of your consciousness. The practitioner of Nada Yoga is able to listen to the voice of his self. The practitioner of Nada Yoga is able to be in contact with his higher self, his over self, or whatever you may call it. He is able to contact his higher self and hear its inner voice. He is in an intimate relation with that which directs him from the deeper levels of his being. Just as you are guided by someone you meet on the way and who tells you which way to go, such guidance comes in the form of thinking, in the form of feeling, in the form of inspiration and also in the form of speech. The inner voice speaks to you directly. Of course not continuously as I do, but it does tell you "no", "yes". In order to develop the inner voice so that it may guide you through the turmoils of life and get you out of the confusion, Nada Yoga is a science whose practice is necessary. As far as the spiritual realization is concerned, the Nada Yoga samadhi is called the blissful samadhi, the *maha sukha samadhi*. It is full of bliss.

This was a brief introduction to the science of Nada Yoga.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Kundalini Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Copenhagen, Denmark, March, 1971

The topic is the chakras. The word *chakra* comes from the Tantric sources in which it is understood or explained that the chakras are the subtle constitution of every man. But here I am discussing the chakras which are the centers of psychic energy, of higher faculties in man, situated in some of the parts of the human body which I will explain in detail.

There are centers in the human body which are directly and intimately connected with those centers in the brain which are sleeping, which are dormant and not yet in use. At this moment I do not have to tell you in detail about the great powers that are lying hidden and un-illuminated in the brain of human beings. Only a little section of it has come to manifestation and a large part of the brain of human beings yet remains to be illuminated, to be manifested or to come to self expression.

In the course of evolution of mankind, in thousands and thousands of years to come, every part of the brain is going to come to function. Until the time each and every cell of the brain, each and every circuit in the brain is brought to full activity, humanity might have to go on for millions and not just a few thousands of years. If this is the law of evolution then it ought to be possible to accelerate the process of evolution. With a greater speed, we can bring about the much required transformation in the entire structure of the brain and thus attain the full illumination and the fuller

manifestation of our personality as early as possible. That is the subject matter concerning the chakras.

Important about the chakras is the practice. This practice is scientific and therefore, very delicate. Although it is full of myths, full of mythology because a lot of fictions are around it, at the same time it is a very practical and sound science which can be understood and explained in terms of modern physiology.

There are six chakras in the human body which are directly connected with the higher un-illuminated centers of the brain. These six centers which I am discussing now are known as chakras. You can also translate them into the word 'plexus' or psychic centers. These six chakras are situated at six different points in this physical and material body. Each and every chakra has got a particular position and through certain systems it is connected with the brain. Through the brain it is connected with that part of the brain that is to come into manifestation. For those of you who might have gone through a translation of the book called the *Bhagavad Gita*, if you read the first verse of chapter fifteen then you would understand what we are talking about at this moment. You would start understanding about the chakras.

The first chakra is situated in the coccygeal region in the form of a gland in the masculine body. In the feminine body it is situated at the posterior of the cervix at the lower root of the uterus in the form of a very sensitive and very effective gland. This is known in yoga as Muladhara chakra which is usually translated as coccygeal plexus. According to Kundalini Yoga the Muladhara chakra or the coccygeal plexus is the seat of Shakti, or the seat of the awakening of power, Therefore, in Tantra the symbol of Muladhara chakra

is the inverted triangle which is the opposite symbol of Shiva, the consciousness, the upright triangle. Muladhara chakra is the first chakra in the higher evolution of man, in the spiritual side, when you stop being an animal and start to be a real human being. It is the last chakra in the completion or in the fulfillment of animal evolution. It is said from the coccygeal point right down to the heels there are other lower chakras and those lower chakras are responsible for the development of animal and human qualities, instinct and intellect. These lower chakras are responsible for instinct and intellect. From Muladhara onwards they are the chakras concerning intuition, concerning illumination, concerning the evolution of higher man or the superman. The Muladhara chakra controls the entire excretory, secretory and sexual complex in man.

The second chakra in this order is at the lowest point, terminus of the spinal cord which is known as the sacral plexus and in Tantra it is known as Swadhisthana, which is the second center in and at the root of the spinal cord. The sacral plexus or Swadhisthana controls the situation of the unconscious in man.

The third in the same order, up the spine a little, exactly in line behind the navel but not in the navel but on the interior wall of the spinal column, the vertebral bone where there is a bunch of nerves. This is the third chakra known as the solar plexus or Manipura chakra. The Manipura chakra or the solar plexus controls the entire process of digestion, assimilation, transportation and in some way the temperature control of the body.

The fourth chakra in this order is behind the heart or I should say behind the sternum in the depression of the chest on the interior wall of the vertebral column

where there is a bunch of nerves. That particular area is known as cardiac plexus or Anahata chakra. The cardiac plexus or Anahata chakra controls the heart, the lungs, the diaphragm and the different organs in the same area of the body.

Higher up at the point where the shoulders and neck meet each other is the cervical plexus or Vishuddhi chakra. Vishuddhi chakra controls the thyroid complex and also some systems of articulation, the upper palate and epiglottis.

The top and most important of all the chakras which is situated at the top of the spinal cord and controls almost all the important behaviors of man is the seat of higher transmission known as pineal gland or Ajna chakra. Ajna chakra or the pineal gland controls the muscles, and according to science, as has recently become known, it controls all the sexual activity in man but according to Tantra and yoga it has complete control over all the functions of the life of the disciple or the *shishya*.

These are the six chakras according to Tantra, according to yoga and according to ancient sciences. These chakras are supposed to be and are really the centers in which you can create a stimulus through which you can circulate the power or the sensations to different parts of the brain for awakening. When we talk about the chakras you will have to understand as to how the stimulus or the awakening brought about in these particular centers can be conducted to the higher centers in the brain because there must be some channels, there must be some means of communication and transportation. That means of transportation and communication is known as the *nadis*. Not the nerves but channels for the flow of consciousness.

According to Kundalini Yoga and according to Tantra there are 72,000 or more channels, networks of consciousness through which the stimuli flow like electric currents, from one point to another, covering the whole body over 72,000 channels or the nadis through which the *prana*, the consciousness, the vitality, and every kind of energy flows and maintains the rhythm in different organs of the body. Among those 72,000 nadis or network of channels for the flow of consciousness there are 10 important nerve channels. These 10 nadis should be understood as the 10 main channels of the distribution of the flow of consciousness to every part of the body. Out of these 10 nadis, 3 nadis are supposed to be most important. These 3 control, in fact, all the 10 and 72,000 nerves. These 3 nadis are well known to us as Ida, Pingala and Sushumna. These 3 names should be familiar to us when we start to study the subject of chakras.

Ida controls all the systems in the body on the left side and Pingala controls all the organs of the body on the right side, is the general impression. But in fact Ida controls all the mental processes and Pingala controls all the vital, dynamic and physiological processes. The pranic processes are controlled or are related and conducted by Ida. Ida is known as moon and Pingala is known as sun. That is to say moon represents the mental process and sun the vital or pranic process. In the center of the spinal column flows one nadi which is known as Sushumna and it can also be called Canal Central. You call it Canalis Centralis. Now, Ida, Pingala and Sushumna are the 3 main nadis out of which Sushumna is supposed to be the divine, the superhuman or the supra-mental system,

Now the whole science of chakras is concerned with the awakening of these 3 nadis but previous to this they should be purified. Unless there is purification of these 3 nadis, then the much required awakening can not take place. In the science of Kundalini Yoga and the science of Tantra, it is always said that the awakening of Sushumna must take place. It means that the prana, the energy or the Shakti, or the dynamo must enter into that particular nadi which is situated in the center of the spinal column also known as the spinal cord. It is like a cord and it should be awakened. When the nadi is awakened, when it comes to life, when it becomes a means of communication between the higher and lower worlds, then the awakening of kundalini takes place.

The Sushumna flows inside the spinal column through the central canal. Ida and Pingala move on the upper surface of the spinal cord. That is to say on the body of the spinal cord and not on the inside. Ida and Pingala start from Muladhara, the coccygeal point. Pingala goes to the right, Ida goes from the left. They cross each other at Swadhisthana chakra or the sacral plexus. Up they go in the opposite direction and they meet again at Manipura chakra. Each nadi is crossing the other at the chakras and finally, these two, Ida and Pingala, meet at Ajna chakra at the point of the pineal gland. There they meet with Sushumna, the Canal Central, all 3 meet there.

Another thing concerning awakening you will have to understand. When awakening happens to take place in Pingala then there are certain dynamic powers in man which are the powers that belong to the range of prana, which get awakened. When Ida wakes up, when awakening takes place in Ida, then not the pranic but

the mental processes in man come to fuller, higher or richer manifestation. When Ida and Pingala are both simultaneously awakened then the awakening of Sushumna takes place and all the chakras get awakened simultaneously, as illumination takes place. Expression of all the faculties of the human personality takes place in the higher centers.

For the awakening of these chakras there are many methods in Tantra but there are the two main methods. One is the method of yoga and another is the method of the strict and orthodox Tantric system, out of which yoga can be taken up by all but it is the long path. It is a very long way which you have to go through with patience and perseverance but it is a path for all. Whereas the path of the Tantric system is very short but at the same time it needs absolute and expert guidance and of course it also needs a very special disciple.

When I am discussing the Tantric system, I am referring to the mantra, the yantra and the mandala. Now this Tantric system concerns the system of the worship of Shakti, through the yantras or the mandalas or all those things that have come from the Tantric system. But as far as the yoga system is concerned the awakening can be brought about through the practices of the yogic system also, about which I am going to give you a very short explanation.

Awakening of Sushumna is awakening of all the chakras. Just as when the roots of the plant are watered properly then the plant grows and all the many flowers come out beautifully. In the same manner when the awakening takes place in Sushumna then awakening takes place in all the stages of life. But if awakening takes place in Muladhara or in one or two of any of the other centers, then it is not at

all a complete illumination. It is a partial, one-sided illumination. It is only the awakening of Sushumna that is supposed to be the awakening of Kundalini Shakti or awakening of the entire store of the higher energy in man. So for the awakening of Sushumna or one of the chakras as I said, either the path of the traditional Tantric worship or the path of yoga which is also one part of Tantra should be undertaken by everyone who desires it.

The yoga system concerning illumination, concerning the awakening, talks about the five ways. It tells that the total or whole awakening or the partial awakening, that is the awakening of one of the chakras or faculties, can be brought about by one or two or all the five methods.

One method is of course not to be done because it is by birth. By birth you have one awakening or two awakenings or more. That is possible only if the parents are like that. It is also possible to produce a child with an awakened Sushumna, with an awakened Pingala or with an awakened Ida, so that by birth there are, either fully or partially awakened faculties. If it comes with partial awakening we call it a saint. If it comes with the full illumination then we call it a 'Son of God' or you may call it an incarnation of God. Out of the five ways, the first one is by birth, which of course you can try now (Laughter)

Number two is by the practice of mantra and which is a very powerful, risk free, smooth but of course a sadhana which needs lots of patience. This sadhana is called mantra sadhana or Mantra Yoga or the constant recitation of the mantra, 100 times, 1000 times 100. 000 times and billions of times, so that every part of the brain is completely washed clean. But first you need a

mantra. Through mantra the awakening also can be brought about but that needs a little more time.

The third is called *tapas* which means austerities in English, *tapasya* in Sanskrit. A process of purification, by burning, by setting everything on fire, that is to say a process by which you should be able to create a process of metabolism or a process of elimination, not in your physical body but in your mental or emotional body, so that your mind, so that your emotions, so that the whole personality becomes free from all the dirt, from all the complexes, from all the patterns that cause pain and suffering. That is called *tapasya*, austerity or penance. An act of purification.

Tapasya or austerity should not be misunderstood as standing in cold water or in the snow with the naked body and so on and so forth. Remember, tapasya is a psychological or psycho-emotional process in which you are trying to eliminate from your personality by regular and repeated habits all those habits that are weakness in your mind, all that obstructs the awakening of will power, "I will do this but I can not do it." Why is there this difference between the resolution and the implementation? Why is there so much difference in between resolution and execution? That weakness, that distance, that barrier between resolution and execution, between decision and implementation must be removed. So will power decides once and finishes it off. That is the outcome of tapasya. It is not just to do foolish and stupid austerities.

The fourth method of the awakening according to yoga is through herbs. In Sanskrit the word is *auschadhi* but it should not mean drugs. Through herbs either the partial or the fuller awakening can be brought about. Either the awakening of Ida or Pingala

or awakening of Sushumna which means the entire, total awakening can be brought about. That is known as aushadhi but it is also said that the herbs which should be used to awaken this potentiality, or this life in man should be understood or should be got only through the guru, not without guru. Because there are certain herbs that awaken ones Ida and there are others that awaken only Pingala and there are those that can even suppress both of these two so that you can go to the mental asylum very quickly. So the question of aushadhi or the herbal awakening is a very risky, quick, unreliable method. It should only be got from one who is a very reliable person and who knows the science very well.

The fifth way is known as *samadhi*, equipoise of mind. It is the total merging of individual consciousness with super-consciousness, which needs concentration, meditation and communion. Remember, concentration, then meditation and communion, these processes come one after the other and they are designated by the word *samadhi* and through *samadhi* also by attaining this communion through concentration and meditation you can awaken the whole.

Now regarding the five practices for the awakening which I have spoken about, there must be some preparation also. You can not just produce a yogi. No! Before you produce a particular piece of machinery you have got to have a plan for it and every plan can not produce every kind of machinery. Likewise, every plan can not produce a yogi. Even by practicing yoga in the morning and in the night, as both of the people do, a man and a woman, still they can not produce a yogi. The yogi can be produced either as full-blown yogi or half developed yogi, or a saint or an incarnation, or

the 'Son of God' but that can be produced only under certain supernormal circumstances. It is not the affair of a regular man and woman; it is a very irregular thing. For that purpose one has to study the whole system of Tantra as to how each and every fiber of the physical body, emotional body, astral body and the psychic body have to undergo a process of transformation so that the transformation can bring about an incarnation of a great man.

The preparation for mantra is that you must have a guru. The guru must be one who knows yoga, who

knows Tantra. Not merely a priest, or not merely a good man, a gentle man or sattvic man or equipoised man, no, he must be an artist. He must be a technician of his art who must know why he gives the mantra, the reason. From such a guru when you receive the mantra, then you become his disciple under whose tutelage you are practicing. He becomes your guide who gives you different directions about the mantra and the sadhana or the spiritual practice from time to time. Remember that the mantra which you received not from a man but from the guru and is the seed of the power for which



you are the soil, for which you are the field. As is the soil, so will be the harvest. If you are a nice, a high class soil, then the seed that the guru puts in you, will yield a one hundred percent harvest. If the soil is not fertile, it is like a desert soil, the seed of the guru will yield just a nominal harvest. So, for mantra the preparation is your readiness to become a disciple and to accept a guru.

Now comes the preparation for tapasya or austerity. What is the preparation for austerity? Practice of yoga, simple life, a definite resolve, writing a spiritual diary, analyzing one's karma, analyzing one's actions and reactions from time to time and at the same time a spiritual attitude to life. Then you should be able to do tapasya. Otherwise, tapasya will explode the terrible unconscious, it will explode the terrible subconscious and you will not be able to control its manifestations and this is how the tapasya must be done.

The preparation for the mental, emotional and physical planes must be done for sometime and then only there are practices, which I am not talking about at the moment, which cause awakening and when the awakening is caused then you should have strength enough to bear that awakening. It is not so easy. If you get a sleep injection, I know even if you do not want to you will be drowsy because you have no control over the processes and the action of the brain, you can not control your sleep. If you have got a headache you can not control the headache. Even the physical manifestations are not under our control. If instead of sleep some other manifestations happen in the brain can you definitely have control over that? No! Therefore, before the awakening in the chakras takes place, before the awakening in the higher planes takes place it is important that you must be ready to be able

to hold onto your mind under all the circumstances of the awakening and that is why the awakening in different spheres of the brain, in the different spheres of the psyche and emotions should take place after good preparation, after profound training.

Finally, when Sushumna wakes up, when the chakras are started, there is a higher sphere which is known as Sahasrara or the pituitary body which is the master of all the functions and which is equivalent or equated with a red lotus in Tantra. That wakes up, that is, it blooms and the blooming of that lotus or awakening of that brain or the awakening of that faculty is the purpose of the awakening of the chakras.

Those who are eager to awaken the chakras should not do anything in a hurry or should not be anxious. They should set apart twelve years of their life for this purpose. Twelve years. I do not mean that in one or three years it can not be done. Everything can be done in one month also. Awakening can take place in one month, three months, in one day, even the guru can give you awakening, but you can not hold it. You can not sustain it, if it is awakening. With a weak mind which can not sustain a little bit of cheerfulness, a little bit of excitement, which can not sustain the death of a man, or the separation of husband and wife, how can it sustain that terrible force of the flow of Shakti? Therefore, twelve years are not for the awakening, twelve years are to prepare yourself to hold the awakening. When you live with a guru and prepare your mind, soul and heart, the body and nerves and the glands, the actions, your reactions, your opinions and each and every part of your personality is seasoned, is shaped if you live with the guru. For that twelve years are required because the human being takes a long

time to change himself. Whereas, the awakening of the chakras I would say, is not a matter of a long time and it can take place anytime. This should be kept in mind and it should not be forgotten.

Awakening of chakras is symbolic for the awakening of man and therefore, even if you do not want it now, when you arrive at this point, oh! Then you will say, "I care for it". The evolution in this body will take place and it will definitely take millions of years in the course of human history. If that be so, the thinking man is trying to accelerate this process somehow or the other, and thus coming to a higher point in evolution instead of becoming a superman in 50,000 years, instead of becoming a 'Son of God' in 90,000 years, which of course you will become, why not become the same a little bit earlier when the processes, the practices, the methods are given to you. When it is only a matter of ten or twelve years it is nothing. For twelve years sometimes you remain in jail behind bars and maybe twelve years many people have to spend in the chair of an invalid. So in comparison to the great span of life, to the thousands of years, if a sacrifice of twelve years, maximum not minimum, is made, I think it is worth having.

When you can not create an industry in twelve years and you can not come out of university for twelve years, but in twelve years you can definitely become a superman or 'Son of God'. Maybe you can come out as an incarnation like Moses, Christ, Krishna or Lord Buddha. These twelve years are worth trying for such ends. It is an investment and if it is lost it does not matter for many times you have lost the capital and if you get it all your capital is repaid not only with interest but with grace and a great bonus also.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Bhagavad Gita

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Copenhagen, Denmark, March, 1971

I want to tell you something about the fundamental philosophy of Indian people which involves not only one hour but the whole of life. All of you must have heard the name *Srimad Bhagavad Gita* which is known as Gita in short. It is a part of a great epic which is known as *Mahabharata* literally meaning the great India. I shall use the word Gita instead of *Srimad Bhagavad Gita* although that is the full name of the book. This book has ruled over the minds of Indian thinkers and statesmen for many centuries, and as a matter of fact it has been the book, the thought and the philosophy which the Indian mind understands very quickly, and I am also sure that the people of this western world will also understand it the same way.

The Gita starts in a very dramatic way. Five thousand years ago there were two tribes belonging to the same origin but which grew apart and could not get along with each other and became enemies of each other. So they ultimately prepared to fight a great war in order to resolve very insignificant but quite deep problems. These two families are known as the five brothers and the hundred brothers. The five brothers wanted their legitimate rights respected, but the hundred brothers who were the ruling authorities, who were in power, would not allow the five brothers to have their legitimate rights so that eventually the five brothers became desperate and said that the issue should now

be decided by a war, face to face. When the day came, the two sets of brothers met each other on a great battlefield, which happened to fall quite close to New Delhi in the west of India, and came face to face with their great armies.

The commander in chief of the army was one of the five brothers, whose name was Arjuna. The commander in chief of the army of the hundred brothers was a very grand man, a very powerful and noble man, whose name was Bhishma. This commander in chief was the third of the five brothers, but by virtue of his being a great warrior he became the commander in chief of his own army and his charioteer was Krishna who was known as one of the great incarnations of the Lord. When we talk about the Gita we must make a direct reference to Sri Krishna because it was Sri Krishna who was the pronouncer of the Gita. It is Sri Krishna who is the speaker of the Gita.

Unless you know the life of Sri Krishna right from his birth up to the point of his death you cannot understand anything about the Gita and the meaning of the Gita will be obscure if the life of Krishna is not known to you. Right from the time when his mother conceived him up to the point when he died, Sri Krishna was respected in India as the direct incarnation of God. He faced nothing but problems, nothing but difficulties; there was not one day in his life when he did not fight, when he did not face the problems. But remember, right from the day he was born up to the day he died there was not one day that he did not laugh. In Indian mythology relating to Krishna you can find Krishna as a child playing with sweets, as a boy playing with the cowherd boys and girls, as a statesman giving expert advice, as a warrior fighting tough fights, and as an

advisor giving perfect advice, diplomatic or otherwise. As a guru he gave absolutely superb lessons on yoga and other sciences. This man Krishna was the speaker of the Gita to this commander in chief Arjuna. When both the armies were facing each other then this virtuous commander in chief Arjuna happened to feel despondent. He refused to fight because he thought that he would kill many old associates and he preferred to renounce participating in the war. It is at this time the philosophy of the Gita begins.

Lord Krishna tells Arjuna that a man has to face life, a man has to accept life, and a man has to fight every step of his life. People who expect or wish that life should only be beautiful, that the life should only be comfortable, that life should only be according to their liking; you will never find such a life. It is these people who suffer and it is these people who have difficulties in life. It is always good to accept life in whichever way it comes to you and try to get the best out of it by way of philosophy, by way of understanding, or by way of wisdom. Every man desires, he has great ambitions, and he works in order to fulfill these desires. When the desires are fulfilled he is very happy, but at the same time he is afraid of losing what he has. If his desire remains unfulfilled he is completely broken. With this begin the problems that are mental, the problems that are psychological, and the problems that you call the problems of life. It is not only a battle which you have to face and fight; it is the eternal battle which everybody is fighting, birth after birth.

These five brothers belonged to one group and the one hundred brothers belonged to the other group, these are the two great conflicting forces in every individual. If the individual is to progress, the

conflict is necessary, the fight is necessary. Without conflict, without fight, without facing the conflicting and opposing forces you cannot evolve, you cannot progress. Comfort and pleasure is death and they do not give any kind of push to the individual to go ahead in his life. You have to create a conflict, you have to realize a conflict, you have to face the conflict, and you must continue that conflict and then the forces evolve and something new will come.

Spiritual knowledge, or the higher knowledge or experience comes to one who accepts the conflict, understands it, and continues that conflict and does not evade it. Between these two conflicting forces, these two conflicting parties, within ourselves, you and I are included; there is one, the charioteer who is the driver of the chariot. He is the inner source, and he is the guru, he is the teacher, the body is the chariot and the individual soul has to face the fight, he is the commander in chief, and the inner soul is the guru, is Krishna, who is helping the individual, who is helping you and who is helping me in this conflict. He is not directly involved in the conflict, he is outside the conflict. But in any case he is behind the conflict, he is creating the conflict, because he wants that the soul, that the *jiva*, or the individual self, or the individual consciousness, might evolve.

Now it is in this context that we have to understand the Gita which tells us about the two conflicting forces in human life, out of which one force has to be subdued and the other force has to come up. How to continue this conflict? This conflict has to be continued with an aspiration or background of yoga. Another name of Gita well known to us is of a book on yoga, a scripture on yoga, a yoga shastra, and now that the conflict has

started in you, the only step to take is to understand and to adopt yoga.

Now, therefore, yoga is concerned with the evolution of individual consciousness from the lowest base to the highest level of fructification and blossoming. Where does yoga begin and where does yoga end? Some people say of course yoga begins with Hatha Yoga. I do not disagree because I myself teach Hatha Yoga. But let me be very clear philosophically, without causing any kind of disappointment to anyone of you, yoga has a beginning and it proceeds or progresses, according to the evolution of the consciousness, at various points where yoga comes to a point of culmination but not termination.

The first chapter of the Gita is called the yoga of the dejection of Arjuna. Hatha Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga, Mantra Yoga, Raja Yoga, etc. , you have heard of, but have you ever heard of anyone desiring the yoga of dejection, the yoga of disappointment, yoga of gloom, yoga of frustration, yoga of breakdown, yoga of nervous breakdown and heart attack? Seriously speaking, yoga begins not when you start the mala or the rosary, yoga begins when the scales are heavily loaded against you and when you are facing problems in life. Unless your soul faces difficulties, disappointments, problems, conflicts, it will not become active; it will just remain asleep and totally satisfied. Difficulties and problems are actually accelerators of human evolution. These difficulties and problems should not be considered as only external ones. There are external and internal problems.

The Gita is not talking about material problems. The Gita is not talking about those problems which are the basic necessities of human life like food, clothes and shelter that communists talk about. Gita is talking

about those problems that are deep rooted in man about which psychologists have been talking, and the difficulty is that sometimes you may not even know that you are having difficulties, but you are having them. There are problems concerning your personality, not only your external personality but also the personality which is as deep as the subterranean planes of the ocean. You may say that you have no problems, but I cannot believe it. You may say that you have no difficulties, but I cannot believe it. You may say that you have no conflicts, but I cannot believe it, because it is impossible to exist without them. In everybody, except perhaps the most enlightened individuals, there are two contradictory souls working side by side. Mankind is leading a dual life on the mental plane, not one single life. Everyone is living a dual life, and this duality is present in everybody, in you, in me, and in all, and this is what is called the starting point of yoga.

When we have become aware that there are the two great conflicting forces in us, what should we do now? Should we try to annihilate them, should we hate them, should we criticize them, or should we scream or cry over them, or should we just feel sorry for them, or should we analyze them? We should not put a cover over the conflict, over the struggle, over the battle, whatever that might be in us. Whether I am a good man or a bad man, or a man full of excitement or a man with criminal mindedness, anything that might be, and you must know what is inside you. Modern psychology, as you may be aware, has brought this fact to our notice that there are thousands and thousands of people on this blessed earth who do not want to know what they are, because the moment they know what they are they cannot believe that they are like that and they do

not want to know what they are. This is the greatest thing that is holding us back.

Each and every item of your consciousness, each and every item lurking in the depth of your consciousness must become well known to you. This is the second advice given in the Gita. Whether it is birth or death, loss or gain, praise or criticism, love or hatred, like or dislike, conflict or peace, dullness or excitement, passion or anger, you have to know it, absolutely in detail, and as it is. Remember that if you know your own conflicts, if you know your own problems, you do not get rid of them by knowing that. You have to start a sadhana, in order to get rid of them; you have to start the practical side of yoga.

In the Gita the practical side of yoga begins with Karma Yoga, the yoga of action. You have to convert, you have to transform and transmute your karma, your daily activities, in such a way that they are conducive to your spiritual progress. By karma, by actions, you are expressing yourself; you are giving yourself out and thus unburdening your soul. Side by side with Karma Yoga one should practice Raja Yoga also. Then comes Bhakti Yoga and then come Jnana Yoga. In one's sadhana these are the practices one has to do in order to be victorious in the battle, and to get rid of one of the conflicts that are lurking in your personality. When you have been able to remove the influence or effects of conflicts from your mind, and when your mind is completely free from the infection, or the strangulation, or from the association with these effects, then you are a liberated individual, you are a *jivanmukta*, or you are a *mukta*. The concept of liberation according to Gita is not the concept where you close your eyes and you enter into the great void.

The concept of liberation according to Gita is to live the life but not to be affected by it at anytime, at any cost, and all the time without any conditions. Gita is giving a new dimension to liberation. Gita gives a new dimension to *mukti*, complete freedom, and that should be understood by all of us now.

If you close your eyes, practice meditation, withdraw your mind completely, with great force, you enter into a great void. But this experience of the great void is not experienced in actual life because when you face the peculiar and illogical life, then you know that the great void is completely eliminated, you do not know what samadhi means in life. In the higher stages you experience the *maha sukha*, the great pleasure. I am Brahman, full of bliss and everything is alright, I am part of that consciousness, I am Brahman, I am Shiva. Then you come down to normal life and fight with the wife. The complete freedom, the *moksha*, should be brought upon earth. The freedom, the *moksha*, should be brought into one's daily life.

Freedom should not be restricted, the freedom should not be confined to the meditation room, and the freedom has to come into the kitchen also. The freedom has to be experienced when you are working in a shop. The freedom has to be experienced when you are driving your car at 50 or 70 miles an hour, and the freedom has to be experienced when you are about to face an emotional crisis in your life. Renunciation is not freedom, but freedom should be practiced during your association with the whole of life and not just with half of life. According to the Gita and according to Krishna, renunciation is half of life, partial life, paralyzed life, and abstention, refrainment, giving up that and that, is called half life, partial life, paralyzed life. Therefore,

one should try to attain, one should try to experience freedom in every walk of life. To experience freedom you have to train your mind, you have to train and culture or refine your philosophy, and you have to imbibe new dimensions of awareness.

In order to experience freedom at all times it is not enough to meditate for just one hour. You have to have a completely oriented philosophy and a completely healthy mind and a cultured way of thinking. Please correctly understand this *mukti* or freedom that is talked about in the Gita. This *mukti*, this liberation or freedom has to do with life, it has to do with your love, it has to do with your hatred, it has to do with your frustrations and accomplishments and it has nothing to do with renunciation. In Gita it is said that one does not become a renunciate by renouncing the actions, or be renouncing the duties, or by renouncing the responsibilities, or by evading problems. One has to understand everything in the true light, not in the light of one's limited vision.

Therefore, the philosophy of the Gita or the yoga of the Gita is known as *purna yoga*, which means complete yoga. If you stress Karma Yoga, that is you do only Karma Yoga, no Bhakti Yoga, no Raja Yoga, no Jnana Yoga, this is called *apurna yoga*, incomplete yoga. If I say no smoking, no drinking, only asana, pranayama, eat only fruit, milk, do not put on all those nice clothes, put on geru dhoti only, this is not *purna yoga*, it is *apurna yoga*, it is not complete yoga, it is incomplete yoga. At the same time if someone were to tell you, no Hatha Yoga, no Karma Yoga, not Jnana Yoga, just Bhakti Yoga, singing the name of the Lord, with *tabla*, the drum and dancing, that is enough, that is also incomplete yoga. It is good yoga but it

is incomplete, it is one-sided, lopsided. If you say no Karma Yoga, no Bhakti Yoga, it is only for small people, no Raja Yoga which is for swamis, no Hatha Yoga, it is only for sick people, only Jnana Yoga, *aparokshanubhuti*, direct perception, I am Brahman, nothing else, that is also incomplete yoga.

Even as you have a nice mixture of people, a nice mixture of colors, in the same way you must have a nice combination of yogas in your life because you are not one, you are four. Just like this body needs calcium, iron, phosphates and many other things, in the same way your personality, your life, needs four essential elements. These four elements are dynamism, emotion or devotion, mysticism and respite. That is called complete nourishment complete nutrition for life. Therefore, according to these needs, please remember for dynamism Karma Yoga, for emotions Bhakti Yoga, for mysticism Raja Yoga or Mantra Yoga or Tantra Yoga and for respite Jnana Yoga or Vedanta. This is the philosophy, the approach to life advocated in the Gita, regarding the great conflicts that everybody in every part of the world is facing today.

If you want to bring the philosophy of the Gita into your daily life just remember a few points. First of all, work hard, expect things, but if they do not come, remember that you should not break down, you must have courage. Again go on with your new ventures and enterprises. The second point is that the mind must be balanced, but this balance

of mind should be a spontaneous affair. It should be spontaneous; the mind should not be dragged. It should be a spontaneous culmination of the process of Karma Yoga. Whatever yoga you practice, Karma Yoga or Bhakti Yoga, you should never forget the central consciousness, the *paramatman*, the perfect consciousness, the great Atman, the nuclear consciousness, the *Atman*. If you remember that consciousness within you which is cosmic, which is infinite, which is eternal, then all your yogas will be successful.

Finally, as a practitioner of yoga you must imbibe two great cultures, first, dynamism and second yogic life. Both must be practiced side by side. Dynamism, that is to say, work, accomplishment, fulfillment, ambition, etc. and secondly also the practices of yoga, Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga, one hour or two hours, whatever amount of time you can dedicate to it.

A yoga practitioner should not condemn any phase of life. Whether you are a yoga teacher or a yogi, or a swami, or a yoga practitioner, or a yoga devotee, you should never condemn any phase of life, because all the phases are the phases of consciousness and not devoid or bereft of consciousness. If you condemn any phase of life, whether it is the life of a householder, or a sannyasin's life, or a drunkard's life, anybody's life, you are creating a sickness in your own mind. If he is a sick man, or a limping man, a stammering man, or a weak man, or a great man or a

hopeless man, or a criminal, or a liar, or a debauch, whatever he may be, it is said in the Gita by Krishna, that they are all my phases, they are my different points of evolution, they are different parts of my great picture. With this broad and liberal attitude to life, if you practice your Hatha Yoga or Karma Yoga or Bhakti Yoga, I can assure you that you will not only be successful in life but it will give you enlightenment.

Hari Om Tat Sat



The fourth series of six lectures was given in Paris, France, in venues arranged by Swami Devatmananda Saraswati.

The first lecture is an Introduction to the Vedas which clarifies the nature of the Veda as a vast literature and not some single text. This literature has four divisions respectively intended as practical guides for the correct performance of ceremonies, the duties of the householder, the way of life of the forest-dweller or recluse, and the way of life of the sannyasin or full renunciate.

The second lecture concerns Liberation and explains that there are two paths to liberation. Both separate the Purusha from Prakriti, but one method separates Purusha from Prakriti and the other separates Prakriti from Purusha, respectively leading to knowledge or power.

The third lecture concerns Superconsciousness which is equated with Shunya (Void) plus Consciousness (Chit) plus Bliss (Ananda). There are four steps or processes or tantras for the realization of consciousness, Caryā Tantra, Kriyā Tantra, Yoga Tantra and Angushthottara Tantra, and one's qualification (Adhikara) determines which of the Tantras one belongs to. Common to all is Dhyana Yoga or meditation.

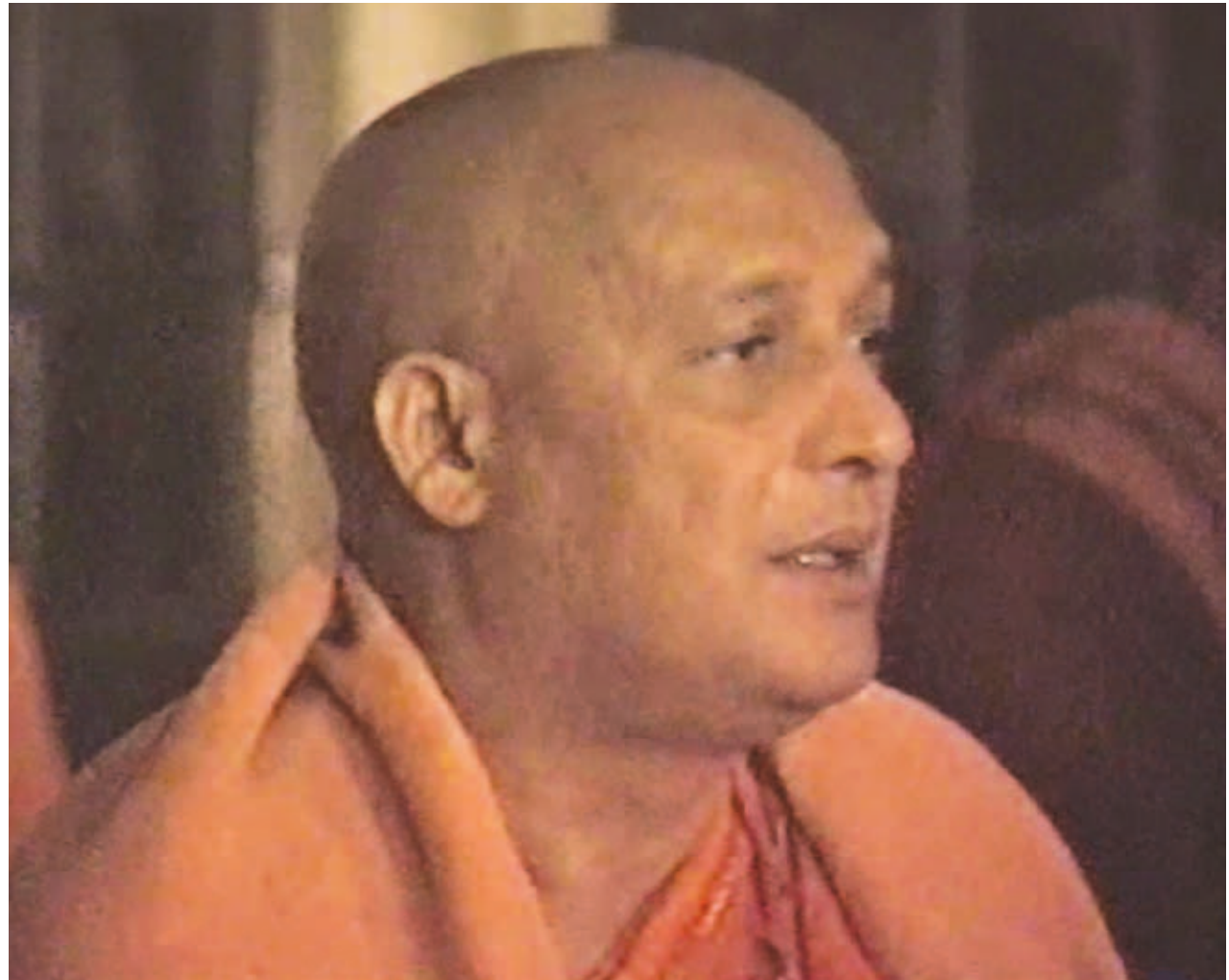
The fourth lecture on the Chakras concerns one part of Kundalini Yoga, that is, the awakening of the chakras. The practices described are intended for those who want to convert emotional energy into psychic energy, who want to make the cakras more sensitive without awakening Kundalini.

The fifth lecture on Kundalini Yoga distinguishes and briefly describes four phases of Kundalini Yoga, the awakening of the Chakras, the awakening of the

Nadis, the opening of the Granthis and the awakening of Kundalini, and he briefly indicates appropriate practices for these phases.

The sixth lecture entitled "Can Yoga replace Drugs?" answers that question in the positive and answers

the opposite question "Can Drugs replace Yoga?" in the negative. Due to drugs mental capacities are often damaged whereas by the practices of yoga and meditation the mental capacities are kept intact and even enhanced.



Introduction to the Vedas

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Paris, France, 1971

*May good thoughts come to me every day
from every side.*

Vedic Mantra

Blessed friends,

This evening is being dedicated to a brief introduction to humanity's greatest literature that is the Vedas. In 1930 it was the first time that I was introduced to the Vedas, and as a matter of fact it was then that I was initiated for the first time into the studies of the Vedas when I was eight years old. The Vedas, about which you are going to have a short introduction this evening, are humanity's greatest treasures and greatest revelations. It is said that the Vedas came out of *hiranya garbha*. *Hiranya garbha* means cosmic unconscious and therefore you can understand how the Vedic scriptures or the Vedic hymns were received, were revealed to various seers from time to time. It does not matter how old the Vedas are and who wrote them first, but the most important point is the subject matter and the purpose for which the Vedas were written.

In 1930 when I was initiated into the study of the Vedas for the first time, I was at first taught a mantra which I remember even to this day, may good thoughts come to me every day from every side. It seems that

the seers of the Vedas had been working on the fundamental problems of human life which they tried to solve during many centuries. It is believed that the Vedas were not written by one person, but that they were written by a galaxy of those people who were known as seers. The word *drashtha* in Sanskrit means someone who is able to see something beyond the physical eyes or beyond the physical sight. Through the mind you can comprehend certain things, of course. But some things are incomprehensible to the mind and inaccessible to the senses. That thing is only to be comprehended by a supra-sensuous medium or instrument.

Therefore, *Veda* meant knowledge which is an outcome of revelation and not the outcome of mental and sensory media. At the same time there is a great misunderstanding not only in the western countries but also in India, which is, that people think that Veda is a particular book, it is not that, Veda is a literature. The Vedic literature is divided into four divisions. In the west and also in India, a mistake is made even by the great scholars like Max Mueller and others in that the first portion of Veda which is known as Samhita, and is meant for the ceremonial purposes, they have introduced or understood as the whole of the Veda. This is not totally correct. The entire Vedic Literature is therefore divided into four divisions. The first division is for ceremonies, the second division is for the householder, the third is for the forest dweller, and the fourth one is for sannyasins.

The first one is known as Samhita which is a collection of hymns to different forces of nature, and in that is contained the ceremonial part or the ritual

part of the Veda. The second part is known as the Brahmana, which means the portion which pertains to the duties of householders, who are married, who have children, who are to discharge their obligations. There are a great number of Brahmanas and these books contain the duties, the functions, the obligations, the disciplines, and many other things concerning the life of a householder. This is a very important section of the Veda because it concerns the whole of society. As a matter of fact, the ancient Aryan society and the present Hindu society are structured according to this particular section of the Veda called the Brahmanas. The sixteen great psychological ceremonies, that Hindus perform now, and the ancients performed in the older days, from the time of conception in the womb up to the point of death and a little later. These are the sixteen ceremonies a Hindu or an Aryan is supposed to undergo; they are laid down in these books called the Brahmanas.

These Brahmana portions of the Veda have been the guardian and guides of the whole Aryan and Hindu society for many, many centuries up to this day. They are actually the foundation of a great civilization. On the other hand in the first portion of the Veda which is known as Samhita, the duty of a *brahmacharin*, the duty of the student towards the guru or the teacher, his behavior and his functions as a student, all these are enjoined in the Samhita portion of the Veda.

The third part of the Veda is known as Aranyaka which means concerning the forest life. In ancient times it was thought that every householder, after he fulfilled all his obligations towards the society, he should also try to renounce the attachments, the



infections, the commitments and any other notions of the usual society; he detaches himself for a higher purpose. In these portions of the Veda it is said that when a householder has fulfilled his obligations and has also fulfilled his desires, has worked out a lot of karma and has also enjoyed and suffered attachment and so on, then he should cut the bonds, or break the links with the normal life and try to retire with his wife, into seclusion, into the forest, and thus he should live. The Aranyakas describe under which conditions and how a householder and his wife should live. What are their social obligations from which they are exempted, and what kind of food they should eat and what kind of company they should keep and so many other rules and guidance are enjoined in this portion of the Veda.

In the fourth part are those books which are known as Upanishads. They are concerned only with the knowledge of the Self, the Atman. They have nothing to do with society and social obligations, nor with commitments, nor with attachments. They are dedicated purely to the research or to the realization of the higher being, the Brahman or the Atman. These books are known as Upanishads which were actually teachings of the guru to his disciples.

The major Upanishads that are currently available are one hundred and eight Upanishads. Then there are the volumes of the Aranyaka, the books for the forest dwellers, and then there are the Brahmanas, the books for the householders, and finally there are the books for brahmacharin, the student, which is in the Samhita portion of the Veda. So the literature consisting of all these books is collectively known as the Veda and not just a single book.

According to the tradition there are three Vedas, though it is written in many books that there are four Vedas so I want to make a little correction. That there are four Vedas is the opinion of ninety nine percent of scholars. But actually there are only three Vedas. Rig Veda is chanted and it is known as Rig Veda, and when the Rig Veda is sung it is known as Sama Veda, and that is why they say that there are four Vedas. The texts are three, the names are four. If Rig Veda is sung in the form of music it is known as Sama Veda. Out of these the Rig Veda is the most ancient. Yayur Veda is divided into two sections. One is called the white Yayur Veda and the other is called the black Yayur Veda, which are followed by different sections of Hindus in India. The Sama Veda is the source of music, it is the origin of music; it is said that music originated through Sama Veda.

The last is Atharva Veda which may be the last but is the most important of all the Vedas. In the Atharva Veda you will find many sciences such as alchemy, Ayur Veda, the science of archery, magic and hypnotism, all kinds of medicines, Tantra, the yogic practices, and all mystic, occult, psychic and other sciences concerning the herbs, the minerals, etc. The whole of the Atharva Veda text has to be studied very carefully and personally and then you will find out what a fund of knowledge those people had.

From these Vedas comes the Upanishads which are supposed to be the culminating point of the Veda, where the laws of Veda come to a point of fructification, or a point of bearing fruit. Vedic society had laid down so many conditions and prescriptions that many people got fed up with it. The religion, the society and the culture had almost become

mechanical as happens in every age. The Upanishads were created to free man from the errors of these religious institutions. Right from the beginning of creation man has always conceived God as a separate being, separate from himself, fit to be worshiped, and of whom one was the servant. This is an important view of man that the Upanishads have corrected. As you know, since the beginning of creation, primitive man looked upon the higher power, upon which he looked with awe, fear, and wonder as something separate from himself. For the first time in the history of man the rishis of the Upanishads started to think about one consciousness, Atman, which was no different from one's own self, and which was one and the same in all, which was not separate from me, which was myself and of which I was a part. Until then God was propitiated, he was worshipped, prayers were given to him and he was seen as a second and separate person.

But with the advent of the Upanishads all these things took a turn, they reached a point of culmination; they started what we call the act of meditation, or inner traveling. Finally the Upanishads concluded with a philosophy based on *Brahman*, the Supreme consciousness, *Atman*, the individual consciousness, *avidya*, ignorance, *maya*, the great illusion, which means that everything was inherent in human consciousness, and what we saw outside was only a projection of what was in ourselves. This philosophy is known as Vedanta.

So in brief I have given you an idea about the great literature of Veda which was conceived thousands of years ago and which exists in India even to this day.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Liberation

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Paris, France, 1971

We are going to discuss the very important topic of liberation which concerns our whole life, which concerns the whole of human evolution. It appears that people believe that liberation is complete freedom from life, and once this freedom is attained, man has nothing to do with life, and has nothing to do with society, and nothing to do with any kind of evolution. It is not that. In my opinion, liberation does not make any difference in so far as the other side of evolution of mankind is concerned. Even as from matter, uranium, the energy is released by a certain process, and when the energy becomes completely free from the clutches of matter, it becomes Shakti, it becomes very powerful.

According to Sankhya philosophy and also according to Tantric philosophy, there are two eternal elements. One is called the matter principle and the other is called the consciousness principle. The entire creation, everything that is known to us and everything that exists, is made of two principles, matter and consciousness. Consciousness is inherent in all matter. Myself, yourself and everything is made of these two eternal elements which are working in complete unison and complete uniformity. Classically, they are known as purusha and prakriti. They are also known as Shiva and Shakti in Tantric philosophy. Now, this consciousness is arrested, or this consciousness is completely caught up, or this consciousness is bound by the clutches of prakriti. The ignorant man, who is not aware of consciousness, who is not aware of purusha, only

sees and understands the matter. With his naked eyes, with his limited vision he is not able to perceive what we call the purusha.

The body is matter and the mind is matter, the senses are matter and these are made up of three gunas; sattwa, rajas and tamas. The consciousness is hidden in the folds of prakriti, in the folds of matter. Even as the scientists have discovered energy and Shakti in matter and have tried to manifest this energy through the process of fission, in the same way, through a particular process, this consciousness or this purusha is to be separated from prakriti. How to separate this consciousness from prakriti, and what is the process of separation? That is the subject matter of liberation or moksha.

In fact, liberation is not what you attain after death, or it is not that which takes you completely away from life; liberation is not what takes you away from work, responsibilities, understanding and the enjoyments of life. Liberation should not be understood as complete departure from life. Liberation has nothing to do with the social aspects of your life. Consciousness, the purusha, should be separated, and when the purusha is separated then the energy, the Shakti, manifests in man.

According to Buddhist philosophy, it is the purusha which should be separated from Shakti, but according to Tantra, it is Shakti which is to be separated from purusha. This separation can be accomplished. Scientists are able to do this separation on an inert matter, or a chemical or a mineral. The yogi does this act of separation upon himself, upon his mind. We need to understand one more thing. The quality of purusha is consciousness, the attribute of purusha is consciousness, and the attribute of prakriti is execution, dynamism, activity or kriya. It should also be understood that purusha is not dynamic but it is full of jnana.

When purusha and prakriti come together, then the creation begins, then the action begins. One desires and one moves. Thus a lot of work that we do is happening because of this union of purusha and prakriti. The Buddhists will say that during your practices of meditation you do not need to worry about prakriti. You should not worry about this nature, just be aware of consciousness, just be aware of jnana, that is all. According to Buddha, and according to Buddhist philosophy, purusha, which is of the nature of knowledge, is supreme and absolute, and it is consciousness and it is awareness of the purusha which must be achieved for liberation. They say that purusha has to be liberated from the clutches of prakriti.

The Tantrics in particular, and the Hindu thinkers in general, will ask you to liberate this Shakti, to liberate the prakriti from the folds of purusha. Prakriti is Shakti. Its attribute is power. Its attribute is energy. It is like an explosion. It is a quality by itself. It is capable of creating. It is capable of multiplying. It is capable of moving things, and it comes to us in the form of siddhi. They believe that an infinite magazine or source of power is in the clutches of purusha. Therefore, this infinite source of power which is man, though it is matter, should be separated from purusha, and it should be utilized. That is why the Hindus in general and Tantrics in particular are the worshippers of Shakti and the Buddhists are the worshippers of consciousness or the purusha.

Therefore, you have two clear views before yourself. You have to separate the two but it depends on you whether you want to separate the purusha from prakriti or whether you want to separate the prakriti from purusha, and the results are completely different. The result of one is knowledge and the result of the other is power. In conscious life, whenever your mind goes

to sensual pleasures, deny it and remain aware of your consciousness. This is one path. Again, when you are in meditation, different thoughts come to you, deny them, just be aware of yourself. That is the same path. When you are in meditation, visions, colors, dramas, many manifestations in different planes of existence will come to you. Deny and refuse them, just remain aware of consciousness, and this is one path.

To repeat this idea once again because it is very important, just remain aware of the purusha or the awareness. Mental experiences or sense experiences or bodily experiences or psychic experiences or experiences belonging to other astral planes, everything should be neglected and everything should be denied. Withdraw your mind from all experiences and remain steadfast on one consciousness that is the Atman or the Self. That is one path. Let me explain this to you once more. When your mind becomes conscious of the body, try to be conscious of the Atman. Again, the mind will drag you to so many desires, so many experiences, psychic or otherwise, you have to withdraw your mind again and again to that one point of consciousness, that is to say, you have to disassociate, you have to withdraw the consciousness from every other experience that comes to you during the waking state and during meditation.

On the other path, whatever comes to your mind, whatever happens to your body, whatever happens on your astral plane, or on your psychic plane, or your sensory plane, just be aware of that, forget yourself. During waking or during meditation, when you are practicing it, remain aware of all the sensations of the body, of the senses, of the mind, of the psyche, and of all the astral planes, whatever is happening; but do not remember yourself, forget this ego. In the first path you are trying to isolate the prakriti. In the second path

you are trying to isolate the purusha. The isolation of prakriti in the first path and the isolation of purusha in the second path is known in yoga as kaivalya, isolation of prakriti and isolation of purusha from each other, their separation. This is like separating the butter from the milk.

Human consciousness is mixed up. Human life is also a mixture. By the practices of yoga we have to separate these two eternal elements from each other according to our evolution. We may take to the first path or we may take to the second path according to our evolution. But I can only tell you that the second path is the easiest and most useful path, although it leads to spiritual darkness for the aspirant.

Now, in both cases, liberation is achieved, but the result of the first type of liberation is knowledge and the result of the second liberation is power. It is up to you to choose which of the two you need.

In this body there is a male and there is a female deity. I am trying to translate the words of a great saint. In this body there is a male and female and they are living together. He who knows how to separate them knows how to practice yoga.

So in conclusion, liberation does not mean death. Liberation does not mean a kind of absence from life. Liberation only means that you are trying to release the powers, you are trying to release the knowledge, from the bondage of maya, the bondage of prakriti, and other items of consciousness. The process of this liberation or moksha constitutes the spiritual practices in the form of yoga, in the form of meditation. If at all you care to analyze and try to understand what is happening in meditation, you will completely agree with me that you are actually accomplishing a process of liberation, liberation of the self from the mind and the objects. For the time being,

your consciousness is liberated from the sensory, bodily, mental, intellectual and emotional strangulations or bondages. This is temporary.

This liberation that happens to you in your daily meditations, when you become free from certain links and bondages is temporary. By constant spiritual practice, by relentless spiritual service, you will have to make it permanent. When you practice meditation at night sometimes the meditation is well done and then you find that for about half an hour you were just dwelling in your consciousness and you have made a completely departure from mental and emotional life. You were only thinking of the Self, this is called the path to moksha. It is a kind of temporary condition. But by relentless spiritual practices, after a good long time, when you are completely established in your practice, then there happens an event when your consciousness is completely released or is separated from the bondage of prakriti and you are permanently established in that condition of consciousness.

Freedom or liberation involves two great things in human life, purusha and prakriti, Shiva and Shakti. Liberation is attained in degrees also. Once the liberation is attained, then the individual or purusha is not affected by the actions of prakriti, by the karmas or the gunas or the attributes or the qualities of prakriti. He is completely peaceful and full of knowledge.

We have seen in the scheme of this great universe and in the scheme of human life, the evolution to which we are subjected is ultimately to end at this point where a complete separation is going to take place. When these two eternal elements work together then there is pain and suffering. But when these two work separately, there is bliss and power.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Super-consciousness

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Paris, France, 1971

Void plus consciousness, plus bliss is equal to super-consciousness.

Satyananda Paramahansa

I came a few days ago to start another ashram in Europe. In fact, maintaining contact with the subject of this evening's talk, I can assure you that the purpose of my movement in Europe and elsewhere, is not the physical and gymnastic side of yoga, though I do teach that also, but the main purpose through which I am inspired to open these centers in different parts of Europe, the United States and elsewhere is to provide a place for those spiritually minded people who are really trying to take all the steps necessary to reach super-consciousness. Although I have nothing against Hatha Yoga, the physical yoga which is one of my pet subjects, I can tell you that the only inspiration that guides me is that people should take to the path of super-consciousness.

Inspired by that particular idea I want you to consider me not only as a yoga teacher, but you should only consider me as a simple swami. Many people in France, some years ago, wanted me to provide a place where they could go and learn the techniques of spiritual life and steps to super-consciousness, and as a result of that Shivananda Ashram Paris came into existence. Along those lines, I was also requested by the people of Belfast that in context of the emotional disturbances

in the country of Ireland, it would be wise if we could initiate a spiritual movement in which the people of that country and also the people of the United Kingdom could come and learn the great and uplifting science of the yoga of meditation, and find out the path to super-consciousness or samadhi. While inaugurating the yoga

ashram in Belfast I told the people there, that whatever may be your religion, to whichever denomination you may belong, remember as an individual, as a *jivatman*, you have to strike through and go on to the path of self enlightenment which is one and the same for all and without conflict.



In Europe, in the United States, in Australia and in the Far East, a new word has come up with the emergence of the psychedelic people, and that word is known as the expansion of consciousness. Timothy Leary, the inventor of this word, has said that with the help of a particular drug which he discovered, it is possible to transcend the limitation of the mind or day to day consciousness. He has also said that in comparison to what we ought to be, we are only half awake. Beyond the states of the sensual consciousness there is a state which is so wide which is so full and infinite, so that in that state all of existence can be contained, even as the ocean contains all the waters. The individual consciousness, which is empirical, can be divided into three states, the waking consciousness, the dreaming consciousness and the sleep unconscious. The first state of consciousness, which is known as waking consciousness, or *jagriti* in Sanskrit, belong to the activities and full fledged playing of ten senses, fourfold mind, five pranas, five elements and one individual soul.

The individual self gains knowledge in the waking state through these twenty one mediums or these twenty one sources. Empirical consciousness is not perfect because it is subject to changes, subject to transformation, and it is subject to all kinds of imperfections or errors of perception. Then, there is the other state of consciousness through which we gain knowledge and that is known as dream, and in Sanskrit we call it *swapna*. The knowledge gained in dreams is no doubt, dependent of these twenty one sources of knowledge, but it is subjective and not objective.

In the third state of consciousness, knowledge is in a dormant condition, you do not know anything, you do not feel anything, you do not understand anything, and no experience and no awareness and no perception

takes place there, yet it is potential and in Sanskrit is called *nidra*.

These three conditions of existence belong to the empirical existence of human beings and they are called the earthly or worldly existence. Beyond these three states of existence there is a fourth one which is known as super-consciousness. This state of super-consciousness should be differentiated by the absence of these three states of consciousness. No subjective knowledge, no objective knowledge, no absence of knowledge can characterize this super-consciousness or samadhi, called *turya* in Sanskrit. .

If I can sum up the views of all the saints and sages regarding samadhi or super-consciousness I can say that it is void, plus consciousness, plus bliss and is equal to super-consciousness. Void means absence of everything, *shunya*. You may say nothing, no thing. Shunya or void is not the only characteristics of samadhi, but void plus Consciousness with capital C. Consciousness here implies *Atma* or *vibhuti*, experience of higher consciousness, or experience of formless consciousness, or experience of abstract consciousness, or experience of ego-less consciousness. It also means that in the state of voidness, in the state of shunya, the state of nothingness does not prevail. It is as if something is there, but that something is formless consciousness. That is called bliss, the bliss that does not arise out of sense contact, but the bliss that arises from the knowledge of the Self. To conclude, the definition of the super-consciousness involves shunya plus consciousness plus *anandam* or bliss.

In order to arrive at this higher state, in order to attain this higher state of consciousness there should be a way, there must be a sadhana, there must be certain practices which we have to understand. Out of all the

methods known to mankind, there is one practice which sums up, which completely solves the problem of how to reach this great experience. This particular system is known as Tantra. In previous meetings I have told you that Tantra does not mean what you usually understand but which you must understand properly. Tantra does not mean any particular practice. Tantra discusses how to liberate the consciousness from the thralldom of this existence and how to unite it with the higher existence, the super-consciousness.

The word Tantra is composed of two ideas. *Tan* means stretching, and *tra* means liberating or making one free. Tantra means stretching the individual self out and making it free from the clutches of prakriti, from the clutches of sattwa, rajas and tamas, from the clutches of empirical and physical existence. It is not only yoga that comes from Tantra, astrology is also a part of Tantra, as well as, many other things.

Now, how do we attain this higher state of existence? According to Tantra, first of all you have to find out to which category you belong to, or what your state of evolution is to date. This is very important. It is not only that you should take to Hatha Yoga, or yoga according to Patanjali, or meditations according to Zen Buddhism. You have to determine at which point of evolution you stand at this time and how much you have worked out in your previous lives. When you read books by great saints like Swami Ram Das, or Swami Sivananda, or Swami Vivekananda or Ramakrishna, or Sri Aurobindo, or Ramana Maharishi, and many books of great saints of the orient or occident, you feel that you have to start your practice from what they have written in the books. It is here that I say no! That is for your inspiration, that is for your encouragement, and that is not your timetable. It is like reading the syllabus

for different courses in the University and trying to take all the courses in the syllabus which is absolutely unimaginable and a great error. You have to understand first what are your facilities now, and for which you are meant, and what is your aptitude, and what are your limitations, social, moral, mental, intellectual, as well as, emotional. The Tantric system has been very clear when it says that there are four steps to the realization of the higher consciousness. The first one is charya Tantra, the second one is kriya Tantra, the third one is yoga Tantra and the fourth one is angushtotara Tantra, all of which I am going to explain.

Charya Tantra states that a man must practice yoga and other such practices in such a way that there must be complete discipline. He cannot eat what he likes. He cannot do what he likes. He cannot move where he likes. What meditation that has been given to him, that alone he has to practice and there must be absolute discipline, and no half-way. Now, this charya Tantra is really beneficial for those people who are very strong, who have worked out the process of evolution to a very great extent in their previous lives, or who must have been, according to the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *yoga drashta*, which means that they must have stopped the yoga practice at the eleventh hour, at the last moment. In one of the chapters it is said that when a yogi dies while practicing yoga and is unable to attain the super-consciousness in their life, then in the next life he is born in the family of such a man where he can practice yoga with all the facilities and then he starts yoga from that point where he had stopped in his previous life. He is then fit for charya Tantra.

The second category of aspirants is fit for kriya Tantra and they are given a path but they are allowed to lead a normal life of householder with their

emotional characteristics, whatever the short comings may be, everything is allowed according to the culture, according to the customs, according to the individual whims. If they want to eat a particular kind of food, they can. If they want to continue with the marital life, they can. If they want to follow some type of religion, they can. These people are known as the practitioners of kriya Tantra. They start their practices from a lower rung or you may say from an elementary stage.

Then there is the third category of aspirants who are known as the practitioners of yoga Tantra, and in this yoga Tantra it is said that he should get the lessons from his guru. He has not got to decide anything for himself. What the guru tells him regarding his sadhana he has to practice quietly and innocently. He should not worry about food, he should not worry about his status in life, he should not worry about the marital relations, he should not worry about anything whatsoever. As per the benign and compassionate instructions of the guru, he should practice yoga. This type of aspirant is really fortunate, is really blessed, although they stand at a very elementary stage of evolution, but their progress is very fast because of their being ego-less and also innocent. There is much confusion concerning the spiritual path on the intellectual plane and they are kept free from these confusions and intellectual conflicts. In the practice of spiritual life, sometimes there are things which seem to be very illogical and not in complete agreement with the intellectual acceptances. Actually you cannot solve these problems. There is only one way, either you face those problems and keep on facing them all throughout your life until you are finished, or else you just put them aside and go on your way. On the path of yoga Tantra the spiritual aspirant relies on the benign qualities and benevolence, faith and respect of his guru, and follows

the spiritual dictums and the path of sadhana without questioning either within or questioning without. This path is the safest and best, but only for innocents.

The fourth system is known as angushtotara Tantra, in which nothing is done, the guru just calls his disciple and gives him the experience. The guru calls the disciple or chooses the disciple, or finds the disciple; or rather he fishes out a disciple and gives him the experience. That is all. The disciple has to do nothing, and all that has to be done has to be done by the guru.

Now, you have to find out whether you are suited for charya Tantra, or kriya Tantra, or yoga Tantra or angushtotara Tantra. If you are very strong, and you think, "I think, and I do, come what may, I do not care. Rigor, austerity, abstentions, whatever that might be, like Buddha", go to the first way. But if you have some karmas to be worked out, some samskaras to be worked out, and have a little love for the fur coat, and a little love for the home, a little love for your people it is not bad. But if you have these intrinsic attachments, inherent attachments, I would call them intuitive attachments, it would be much better to choose the second path and not to single out the first one, do not talk about the first one, have respect for it, but say Hari Om. If you have to work out your karma, find it out, if you have to work out your samskaras, know it, sincerely and honestly, do not take to the first path or else you are going to get into deep trouble.

But if you are a very obedient, sincere, understanding, innocent, as Christ would say, a childlike disciple unable to question, unable to doubt, unable to think so many complicated things about spiritual life, then you better practice the third way. You will be not only safe, you will be quick also. If you do not think about the form of your character, about the dietary discipline, about the path of

sadhana, and about so many things that are spiritually, religiously, and intellectually a part of the spiritual life and if you can feel a few things; if you can get smells without anything in front of you, if you can feel someone in your room though no-one is there, if your psychic and astral experiences are too frequent, then you must first of all go to a guru, and you do not have to do anything, the guru will know that such a disciple has come, because the disciple sends his vibrations, and the guru will know that the disciple has come, and that inner contact automatically takes place. Then you belong to the fourth category of disciple but the guru has to know.

Now according to these distinctions, according to these classifications, the spiritual life has to be taken up by all of us, by understanding, by analyzing the personality that belongs to us. When you choose for yourself some kind of yoga, whether it is Raja Yoga or it is Mantra Yoga, or it is Karma Yoga, or Jnana Yoga or a synthesis of all the yogas, you must first of all remember whether you belong to the first, the second or the third type of aspirant. I will not talk about the fourth. In order to find out to which category you belong please do not impose any kind of moral rules on yourself while you are practicing the path of Jnana Yoga, concentration, or meditation or during *satsang*, that is association with holy people, be spontaneous. Try to see what exactly is automatic; what exactly is natural, what exactly is spontaneous in your personality.

If you give this freedom to yourself, only then will you be able to know yourself. If you try to impose rules and regulations upon yourself in the name of spiritual life, your mind, your life will undergo a process of inhibition. In all cases, the path that is common is the path of meditation, or is the path of Dhyana Yoga.

The path of meditation is the path that leads you from gross objects to the subtle objects and from the subtle objects to a state that is object-less. Your individual consciousness is trying to disassociate itself from the external objects and is trying to become free from its identity or relationship with the outer life for some time and to be conscious of itself. Whether it is the path of charya Tantra, or kriya Tantra, or the path of yoga Tantra, the path of meditation is divided into two stages which I am going to explain.

The first part of meditation is a process of elimination or a process of thinning out, or a process of unification. The second phase of meditation is not elimination, it is expansion. The first process of meditation is to make yourself void, zero, shunya. The second stage is to expand consciousness inwardly, an objectless expansion. By meditation you are trying to withdraw your mind, your sensual impressions, to one particular point, and then erase that point, negate it completely, and become shunya, become completely shunya, bereft of any perception internally. No subject, no visions, no color, no symbol, not I, nothing. That is called shunya, that is called void, that is called the state of *pratyahara* in Raja Yoga. If you are trying to create a void of yourself, that is not the ultimate, that is only the first part of Dhyana Yoga. Now, you have to add the second part which is known as dharana, dhyana and samadhi. The senses have been withdrawn, the mind has been withdrawn, the external awareness has been withdrawn, and the personal ego also has been withdrawn. Then you have to develop a kind of consciousness, a kind of higher consciousness internally, which is ego-less consciousness. As soon as this consciousness appears, as soon as this consciousness is manifesting, there

is the overwhelming experience of *anandam*. There is an overwhelming experience of bliss, which is not happiness, which is not joy, which is not ecstasy, which is not an overwhelming emotional outburst, it is a state of absolute peace, sublime equanimity, and it is just a kind of anandam in you, which we call anandam.

So we have come to a very remarkable conclusion concerning the steps to super-consciousness. Just think about yourself completely, without any partiality, without any ego, without any bias. Just be naked unto yourself. Then take to the path of meditation, that is, meditation on two levels, first extinction of consciousness, and second expansion of consciousness. Now, these three things you have to remember; to find out your faculties, secondly to stick to the path of meditation, and thirdly, practice meditation on two different levels. It is unimportant for me now to tell you whether you should take to the path of meditation based on Hatha Yoga, or you should take to the path of meditation based on Raja Yoga, or you should take to the path based on Christianity, or Hinduism, or Buddhism, or Islam, or Sufism. It does not matter which path you take, but remember these three things.

So, in conclusion, it is better to practice kriya Tantra for sometime. Be natural, be normal, and be spontaneous. It is necessary for you to go on with the karma and to fulfill the necessary demands of the samskaras, instead of going either to charya Tantra or yoga Tantra. The path of super-consciousness has been laid down by those people who had realization themselves. To realize this great consciousness which is the ultimate goal of the evolution of mankind you can still continue to live in this blissful and blessed world.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Chakras

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Paris, France, 1971

The chakras are sensitive psychic centers situated on the anterior wall of the spinal cord or the vertebral column at different places and the nerves there are bunched together like a junction and from there the nerves flow to the different parts of the body. There are many ways for awakening these psychic centers. When these react there is a kind of awareness which is known as psychic awareness. In fact, you will be glad to hear from me, emotional awareness, when it is transformed becomes psychic awareness. As steam become water, and water becomes ice, in the same way the emotional force, which all of us, you and me, have in us, becomes a psychic force. There is no doubt that we have already developed our emotional personality, and as a result of that emotional personality you know that nowadays we face a lot of problems in our day to day lives. If we would only transmute or transform this energy into something else, then our psychological problems that we are facing would be nil, they would disappear.

Therefore, in order to transform the emotional energy for the good into psychic energy, Kundalini Yoga and concentration on the chakras is very important and very vital. Concentration on every chakra has a completely different influence on the higher centers in the brain.

If you concentrate in Muladhara or in other chakras the experiences, the psychic manifestations and the results arising there from differ from each other. The



vibrations of Sahasrara chakra are the highest per second, and the vibrations of Muladhara chakra are the lowest per second. Even as you are aware of the notes of music, starting from one, and going to two, three, four, five, six, and seven where each note on the scale has a different and increasing rate of vibration, ending at the climax at the top, in the same way you become aware of the sequence of vibrations of these chakras.

These chakras, Muladhara, Swadhisthana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddhi, Ajna, Bindu and Sahasrara should be compared with the seven notes of the music. On that basis also the relationship of the vibrations should be understood. In short the awakening of the chakras is one part of Kundalini Yoga

and it is not the whole of Kundalini Yoga. If you are not interested in awakening kundalini and chakras such as Muladhara etc, like many yogis wanted and if you are only concerned with making them more sensitive than before and to transform emotional energy into psychic energy, then you can practice concentration on almost all the chakras. Therefore, it is very important that you know the locations of these psychic nerve centers.

In the perineum in a male body is Muladhara. In the female body it is at the bottom of the uterus, on the posterior side. The location of Muladhara in the male and the female body is different. The location of the second chakra is common to both and it is just behind the pubic bone at the coccyx. On the interior wall of

the spinal column exactly behind the navel is Manipura chakra. On the interior wall of the spinal column behind the sternum, that is the depression just below the chest is Anahata chakra. Behind the throat is Vishuddhi. At the top of the spinal cord is Ajna chakra, which is exactly in line with the center between the two eyebrows. At the top of the head at the back is Bindu, and underneath the crown of the head in the pituitary gland is Sahasrara. These are known as chakras or psychic plexuses. They are what we call contact centers. This means that concentrating on them you can contact the main chakra.

Muladhara has no contact center and therefore when you concentrate of Muladhara you have to concentrate either on the perineum or the cervix, according to your sex. Swadhisthana has a contact center; it is at the front, at the bottom of the abdominal viscera, where in the male the vasectomy operation is performed. The navel is the contact center for Manipura. The sternum is the contact center for Anahata. The depression in the throat is the contact center for Vishuddhi. The mid eyebrow center is the contact center for Ajna. Bindu and Sahasrara have no contact centers and they are to be concentrated on directly at the points of their location.

Muladhara contains an inverted red triangle which is a symbol of Shakti or the female energy. Sahasrara contains the upright triangle which is a symbol of Shiva or the positive energy. Where these two triangles intersect each other, that is, in the center of union that is the Anahata or heart chakra. When the two triangles intersect they form six angles. And this means the union of purusha and prakriti, Shiva and Shakti.

Muladhara is the center of Shakti. Sahasrara is the center of Shiva, the purusha. Anahata at the center, at the heart is the center of union. Coming to Bindu, it is

the center of nectar, it is the center of ambrosia, and therefore the symbol for Bindu is the crescent moon and a moonlit night.

At the cervical plexus of the spinal cord is the Vishuddhi chakra, and its sign is just a circle. It is the symbol of *akasha*, the ether. Vishuddhi is the center where the purification of the secretion, the purification of the poison and nectar takes place. It is the center of purification and therefore its symbol is a circle, but violet in color because violet represents the color of the poison. The circle in Swadhisthana is black in color, it represents the Shakti, which is dormant and which is lying in the womb of prakriti, or mula prakriti, or tamas.

Manipura is the center of fire. It is from here that the great awakening takes place, and therefore, it is considered to be of two colors, one is the red color which is the sign of awakening, and the yellow color which is the sign of pure, spiritual awakening. In addition to these symbols and colors, on each chakra, there are the sounds. They are known as mantras, or bija mantras. They express the nature and attitude of each chakra.

I will explain some more about the symbols in Muladhara. First of all we have to understand that the lotus in Muladhara is known as the substratum lotus or adhara padma. It has four petals, and within the petals there is a circle, in the circle there is a square, and within the square there is an inverted triangle, in the interior of the triangle there is an oval shaped lingam with a serpent coiled around it with its hood downwards. The Shiva-lingam, or the linga, which is in Muladhara is smoky in color. Muladhara chakra is important. Its practice can be done in either of two ways. You can either concentrate on Muladhara chakra in the particular physical area, or you can visualize the

chakra at bruhmadhya in chidakasha and then visualize it at the bottom. The Shiva-lingam which you see in this Muladhara chakra is the symbol of the conscious body, that is, the conscious mind. The Shiva-lingam appears again at a higher level which is called Ajna, and again it appears in the highest chakra, the Sahasrara chakra, which represents the super conscious.

Anahata chakra is a most beautiful chakra, and contains the combination of the two triangles, that is to say of Shiva and Shakti. The combination looks like a star and its color is blue. The total number of lotus petals in Anahata chakra is twelve. In Muladhara the number of petals was four and now here it is twelve. The name of the chakra is Anahata chakra, Anahata means un-beaten, and it is also said by many great seers that, even as in Muladhara, there is a Shiva-lingam, the symbol in the Anahata is a blue lotus. Anahata controls all the finer arts, emotions, sentiments and other finer manifestations.

Ajna is the center of Ishvara consciousness; it is also called the third eye which is just behind the mid eyebrow center. The awakening of this chakra according to the practitioners is the easiest. The meaning of Ajna is command. That means that when the consciousness of the disciple is in Ajna then he is in direct communication with the command of his guru. The two petals of Ajna chakra represent the control of the Shiva and the Shakti aspects of human life. Concentration on Ajna chakra brings a state of spontaneous intoxication.

So much about the three chakras concerning which I have given you a brief introduction, and similarly we have other chakras also. I will not be able to talk about them this time, but next time I shall talk about them.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Kundalini Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Paris, France, 1971

This physical body can be said to be energy, Shakti, consciousness and many more things. The matter forms the basis but on the basis of that matter there are many more mysterious processes and hidden things that we have yet to discover. In the fifteenth chapter of the Gita there is a verse which begins by saying that there is a great tree having its roots above and its branches below and this is the topsy-turvy tree. He who knows this tree knows the truth. Ordinarily, everybody climbs the tree from the roots to the branches, but on this tree, one has to climb from the top which however is at the bottom of the tree involved. This is the concept of Kundalini Yoga.

It has been said, that in the body, the greatest and the most important part is the brain which is situated at the top of the body. This brain is physical in so far as the structure, the basis and the formation is concerned. This brain has infinite potentiality, great faculties, and a magazine of knowledge which is hidden and at the same time is expressed. In the course of evolution of the body, the mind, the emotions and the intellect, the brain plays the most important part. In the course of evolution, man has come up from a primitive condition of the brain to this day when we have become aware of our own selves; that is, we have become aware of the I, the ego. As this brain with all its faculties is constantly undergoing the process of evolution,

minute by minute, day by day, week after week, year after year, the brain is being transformed as the new faculties, the new qualities and the great secrets are being revealed.

From time to time, the great rishis and the great seers witnessed fantastic manifestations of power in a few individuals, and some came to believe that these fantastic powers were due to God's grace, or due to some external power, but the rishis did not agree. They thought that this was a manifestation of something very peculiar that was fundamental to the human being, in some part of his body. The most important and fantastic miracle which the rishis witnessed was the awareness of the I, one's own self, in the human being as different from other animals. The animal brain is floating in ignorance, what they call in Sanskrit, in yoga, *ajnanam*, absence of awareness of one's own self.

When man, in the course of his evolution became aware of his own existence that was the first miracle which the rishis witnessed and observed. In addition to that they witnessed many siddhis, miraculous powers, such as, extra sensual knowledge, intuitive knowledge, and many other functions of the individual being, to which their minds were greatly attracted and they began to wonder what it was due to. Many people maintained that it was because God was great and he was giving this knowledge while others thought that some spirit or a particular ghost had entered the man's system and that it was giving this knowledge. In this way the definitions and descriptions went on, therefore, the seers, the rishis and the thinkers were not satisfied. They wanted a logical, scientific answer. In the course of their studies, in the course

of their investigations, they came to understand that in the human body there was a brain and the brain was divided into different compartments and those compartments contained those subtle centers which explained and were responsible for the extra-sensory knowledge and actions. They became so sure about the fact that in the brain there were extra-sensory, supra mental or ultrasonic circuits, which were dormant, which were not expressed and if one could awaken those particular centers in the brain, it would lead to the manifestation of the powers relevant to these particular centers.

The next advance that had to be made was how to contact and how to awaken these different centers in the higher brain. Finally they came to the conclusion that in the body itself there were centers through which you could induce energetic or vital awakenings in the higher centers in the brain which were beyond the reach of ordinary man. In other words, on the basis of the physical structure, or on the physical basis, they were very much intent on awakening the non-physical powers, and this actually led to the formulation of Kundalini Yoga which is part of the Tantric system of Hinduism.

Before I talk about the main theme of Kundalini Yoga with which we are concerned, I want to tell you that below the human psychic regions there are also great psychic centers with which the higher human being is no longer concerned. In Hindu mythology they always talk about the seven upper worlds and the seven lower worlds. They say that these lower worlds are infested by the demons, by the darker beings, which means by the lower beings; the awakening of these lower centers results in the awakening of the devilish powers. There

are of course the practices that are known to aboriginals in India, and also throughout South East Asia, and many other countries, the practices which are able to awaken a great animal power in man. We are not concerned with the awakening of these lower centers, because we feel that human beings have evolved through these stages already.

Above these regions there are the centers which have to be awakened through the practices of Kundalini Yoga. There is only one difference as far as other authors and myself are concerned. All the other authors think that these centers, about which I am going to tell you are, reservoirs of power. But I believe that they are not reservoirs of power but I believe they are the centers for awakening of the corresponding centers in the brain. In the science of Kundalini Yoga, in the perineum, there is one plexus which is known as Muladhara chakra, you may call it the coccyx. At the foundation of the spinal cord is another plexus which is known as Swadhisthana chakra, epi-gastric plexus and again, behind the navel on the interior part of the spinal cord is a third plexus which is known as Manipura chakra, you can call it solar plexus. In the same line, on the interior wall of the spinal column is the fourth plexus which is known as Anahata chakra, or the cardiac plexus and on the same line, at the throat, on the interior wall of the spinal column, is a fifth chakra which is known as Vishuddhi chakra, or the cervical plexus. At the top of the spinal cord, where the spinal cord terminates there is the Ajna chakra, which is otherwise known as the pineal gland. Above that, in the cranial region there is a chakra which is known as Bindu Visarga. In the body of the pituitary gland there is the chakra known as Sahasrara chakra. Actually the Sahasrara is not a chakra, but it is the great center.

Now, these are the chakras which are responsible for the awakening of the hidden spiritual, psychic centers in the brain. They are actually working like switches, where the light is in one place and the switch is in another place. When I turn on the switch the light comes on in another place. In the same way, these psychic centers, or these plexuses or chakras, are directly connected to particular centers in the brain, and they are responsible for the proper awakening that takes place in the plexus. Briefly, it is also said, if it is possible for one to conduct the awakening, or to maintain the awakening of these plexuses, then one can contact these centers or chakras through indirect means. I will give you an example. The Muladhara chakra which is the sacral plexus may be difficult for many people to conceive, and therefore one has to go to that particular organ of the body which is physically connected through the nervous system with this plexus.

It is also said in the books on Kundalini Yoga that each and every chakra controls certain organs of the body, such as the heart, the lungs, glands, digestive system, excretory system, kidneys, bladder and tongue. All these organs are individually and departmentally connected with these chakras. If you concentrate on, or if you try to awaken these particular organs of the body, or if you put these organs of the body into proper order, that also causes a little bit of awakening, and that awakening is transmitted to the plexus, and that is again conducted to the higher centers in the brain.

In addition to this you have to know about those channels which conduct the psychic consciousness. According to the science of Kundalini Yoga and Tantra

there are 72,000 to 300,000 channels for the conducting of the psychic waves or the psychic currents. These are not the physical nerves we know but they are the astral medium for the conducting of psychic consciousness. They are something like the electricity which is conducted through wires and also like many things that are conducted without wires through the ether or space, such as radioactive waves.

Out of the 72,000 nadis, ten are supposed to be very important, and they are situated in the spinal column. Out of these ten the most subtle nadi, the medium of psychic consciousness, is called Brahma nadi. Another important nadi is known as Sushumna, which is sometimes identified by scientists as the vagus nerve. There are two other nadis which we have to know, they are known as Ida and Pingala, the lunar psychic channel and the solar psychic channel, respectively, that is to say the one responsible for conducting psychic energy and the other for conducting vital energy. Ida controls the psychic functions and Pingala controls the pranic or vital functions in the body. If the Pingala nadi or the vital nadi is inhibited and Ida is stimulated, then one thinks more and becomes less dynamic. In the same way, if Ida is inhibited, that is to say the psychic channel is inhibited, and Pingala is stimulated, then one thinks less and is more dynamic. Balance between the activities of Ida and Pingala nadis is responsible for the awakening of Sushumna nadi.

The awakening that is caused in the chakras, the awakening which is caused in the psychic plexus is conducted through these nadis to the different sections of the brain. Therefore, there are some chakras which introduce or which circulate the awakening through

the Pingala channel, and there are other chakras that circulate the awakening through the Ida channel, and there are some chakras which circulate the awakening through the Sushumna channel. Therefore, the whole brain can be divided, according to Kundalini Yoga, into three major systems. There is a section of the brain which responds to Ida, another section which responds to Pingala, and a third section which responds to Sushumna. When awakening takes place through Ida, then all the psychic powers manifest. When the awakening takes place through Sushumna, the spiritual realization or the spiritual awareness takes place.

You should understand very well that the physical basis of the brain contains in itself the subtle energy and consciousness which is the subject matter of Kundalini Yoga. In the evolution of the brain for another hundred of thousand years, a time can come when man will manifest all those different and hidden qualities, but it is also possible that what is to come in hundreds of thousands of years can happen earlier also by voluntary methods. Out of these chakras, there are three chakras which are considered to be very important. First is Muladhara chakra, which is a kind of knot. Second is Anahata chakra, which is a kind of knot and third is Ajna chakra, which is also a kind of knot, which is known as *granthi* in yoga, and these three knots are known in Kundalini Yoga as Brahma granthi, that is the knot of Brahma, Vishnu granthi, that is the knot of Vishnu and Rudra granthi, that is the knot of Rudra or Shiva. Brahma is responsible for creative energy, or anabolism; Rudra is responsible for degeneration or catabolism; and Vishnu is responsible for maintenance, or metabolism. There three knots

have to be opened in the practice of Kundalini Yoga. In order to open these knots there are the practices in different sections or different branches of yoga, which are part of Kundalini Yoga.

Traditionally and according to the texts they say that at the base of the spinal column in the Muladhara chakra is the place of Shakti, which is residing there as a dormant potential energy. Through the practices of yoga the Shakti is stimulated, the Shakti is disturbed and it rises up with a terrific speed and goes up and becomes one with Shiva in Sahasrara where both of them unite. According to one Tantric system it is said that awakening of kundalini can take place with the help of mantra and meditation. According to another system of Tantra it is said that through the practices of Hatha Yoga, that is mudras and bandhas, the awakening can also take place. Other great yogis have also declared that by the practices of the yogic asanas, the yogic postures, the awakening can also take place. These yoga asanas or postures have been taken by the people of our time as gymnastics or physical exercises, but they are part of Kundalini Yoga and of course they are an integral part of Tantra.

For example, *shirshasana*, the headstand pose, belongs to the system of awakening Sahasrara chakra. The practice of yogamudra belongs to the system of awakening Manipura chakra. Veeparita Karani mudra and sarvangasana belong to the system of awakening Vishuddhi. So the yoga postures are intimately connected with the practices of Kundalini Yoga though we learn them as mere physical exercises. In a very few pages it is said in Tantra, that the practice of pranayama is the quickest method of awakening kundalini. We feel that the pranas are already in the body. Due to

pranayama that prana awakens all the nadis, all the nerves, and this causes the awakening of the higher centers in the brain.

There is also the practice of individual concentration on different chakras in the body, with the help of mantra, with the help of sensation, with the help of other methods that are introduced in the Tantric system. Before I conclude, I want to tell you only one thing, that Kundalini Yoga is one practice by which you are qualified to accelerate the evolution in your system. One cannot say that one is not concerned with Kundalini Yoga because all those people who want psychic powers are concerned with Kundalini Yoga. The awakening of these powers will take place, maybe not today, but in hundreds of thousands of years of evolution it will take place. As such, therefore a few ambitious people in this world, and of course there are many such people today who wish to accelerate this evolution and want to develop divine consciousness or higher consciousness in themselves.

Kundalini is not only in this body but it is outside also. Even as in the micro-cosmos it is in the macro-cosmos. You have to understand it that way. Further study of Kundalini Yoga should be done in relation to the position of planets, and the structure of *tattwas*, or elements or principles, and many other things which you see in the external universe. Many practices can be definitely suggested for the awakening of kundalini according to the texts also. One is known as mahamudra and another one is known as mahabhedhamudra.

In short, I gave you an introduction to Kundalini Yoga at this time.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Can Yoga Replace Drugs?

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Paris, France, 1971

Many times I have been invited by people to different countries and the subject that was chosen by them and not by me was can yoga replace drugs. When I am invited on television and other public media I am requested to speak on this same subject. About fifteen years ago, I remember people in America and in other western countries used to say drugs could replace yoga. This was the kind of thinking that was running through the minds of the people. Those people think or are under the impression that drugs can replace yoga as far as the spiritual effects are concerned. I am not here concerned with those drugs which people take to escape, or to forget, or to get into a state of numbness. Here the question is whether by means of certain drugs one can reach a higher state of consciousness, so can they replace yoga?

More than three thousand years ago, in India the Aryan people were aware of one very important creeper by the name of soma. It is known that the juice of that particular creeper called soma was able to create a kind of expanded consciousness in the experience of those people who ingested it. There are references in the ancient scriptures of the Aryans,

such as the Vedas, and the Upanishads, that is the secret doctrines of India, which mention a great drink called soma which the rishis or the spiritual aspirants used to drink and then they would go very high as far as the spiritual consciousness was concerned. But suddenly this drink became extinct. Today, not one man in India can tell you exactly which one is this soma creeper.

After that period of the Vedas, people have many times found different kinds of drugs in order to experience expansion of mind, concentration of mind, and oneness with their own self. For many centuries thinkers and serious people in India did experiment with the influence of drugs on human consciousness and the human mind. But ultimately they came to the conclusion that one should find out some other



and some higher method which could replace drugs in spiritual life. In fact the purpose with which the different drugs were discovered in different parts of the world and especially in India was to develop a higher state of consciousness; you may even call it samadhi. They were used by people who had absolutely restless minds.

About twenty five hundred years ago, at the time of Buddha, there was a great thinker by the name of Patanjali, whose book on yoga is of course well known all over the world, who wrote in his book that for the development of psychic consciousness, for the development of higher and spiritual consciousness there were five different ways. Out of those five methods drugs were one method. The second method was the way of mantra, the third was austerity, the fourth was concentration and the fifth was by birth, inborn. Out of these five methods, the first method consisting in the use of drugs was discussed at length in certain books, such as the Atharva Veda of the Hindus. I can tell you in brief that the purpose was to develop a state of concentration of mind and then to produce a psychic effect and thus get in touch with ones subconscious personality.

From this it follows that the rishis, the great seers of India, and the teachers of yoga, had nothing in particular against drugs because they had been through the path of drugs in their curriculum. If you are aware of the fact that Lord Shiva whom the Hindus respect very much and who is everywhere known as the greatest of all yogis, has always been using one of the most famous modern drugs, and that is ganja. Of course I do not use drugs but there is no doubt that the use of drugs does

bring about states in other levels of the spectrum of human consciousness.

Each and every drug that you use has a different effect on the cerebral structure in general and on the structure of human personality in particular. There are certain drugs that can bring about the explosion of the subconscious mind and there are other drugs which can just make you absolutely schizophrenic and there are other drugs which can explode the guilt complex and there are other drugs which just let you escape from life. There are people of course who say that drugs cause hallucinations, but I can assure you of one thing, not all drugs cause hallucinations. There are only certain drugs responsible for causing hallucinations. There are certain drugs which can immensely help you in the development of the psyche, the lower individual self. The use of drugs can also help you to comprehend time. The concepts of time and space are within the mental frame.

Now I will tell you something concerning my own life. In 1946 this matter came to my mind and I became a little bit greedy about the psychic powers, and I left the place of my guru in Rishikesh, went up to the Himalayas and lived there for nine months using ganja all the time and practicing pranayama in an absolutely snow covered place. After nine months of use, I cannot tell you how great a loss I had in my life for which there is no words of repentance now. It may be of interest to you that I was at the university; I was a student of philosophy and psychology. I had a fantastic memory, a photographic memory. I could hear a one hour lecture once and reproduce it verbatim just like a tape recorder which was not invented yet. Because of that I was not only a student

of philosophy and psychology, but I could also study side by side, medical science and engineering. I knew the Zendavesta, line by line, word by word. But after those nine months of ganja use the memory was completely destroyed, even to this day the memory is completely destroyed. I remember the subject, but it is not possible for me to quote the original lines which I could do previously.

All my exact memories of the books I had known had completely left my mind. After that time I have done much to compensate for that great loss, but I have not been able to regain that photographic memory. You may say that I have a good memory now but in 1946 whenever you put a book before me and asked me to read it, I would do it very rapidly, it would just come in, I could never quite understand it but I could read with eyes closed, without seeing the printed letters. And it was after this loss that I began the practice of yoga to recover this great loss.

I started to practice sincerely the method of Hatha Yoga, pranayama and other practices which concerned my physical and mental bodies. Of course now I tell you that it is very important for each and everybody to know what he has to gain through yoga and what he has to gain through the use of drugs.

Man in general is not satisfied with the present state of existence. east or west, it matters little. Neither prosperity nor poverty can give any answer to the question of human life. It appears that mankind has lost the purpose and the vision with which we have come to this mortal plane. In spite of this we have been searching for something but we do not know what it is. First of all you have to remember that everyone is trying to develop their consciousness to

the spiritual dimension. The intellectual dimension or personality which man has developed these days has not been able to give him satisfaction nor has it been able to give him answers. At the same time, man is not materialistic. A part of him has always been seeking for someone who is unknown, for someone who is unseen and this is due to the evolution of consciousness in man.

In this respect we have to understand that yoga has a very important part to play. The practices of yoga, which means the practices of meditation, can give one a state of consciousness where he can see something which he cannot experience in his normal state. In this context yoga should not be understood as only consisting of the postures or the breathing exercises. If you understand very carefully and if you know anything about yoga, you will know that it means a process for the awakening and unfolding of the unseen and hidden consciousness in man.

In order to evolve this personality through this mind, and in order to take a jump over this mind, it is important that one should know about those stages, or those aspects of yoga which are known as Kundalini Yoga and Kriya Yoga. Very recently, I was in Copenhagen and there I am in touch through my teachers with many students who are lying in mental hospitals after being struck down by the aftereffects of drug addiction. Mental hospitals are full of those who have been struck down by the use of drugs and my teachers have been officially involved in work at these hospitals for one year with government support.

I found that in those people the motor cortex and the sensory cortex are not functioning systematically, and because of that their mental capacities have

gone much below the standard, although they have certain visions, which they call spiritual visions, and they see fantastic pictures no doubt, but their mental capacities have degenerated quite a lot. One of the boys that used to come to our teachers once asked whether it is possible that through the practices of yoga we can develop our consciousness and have higher experiences. The case was referred to me and I wrote a letter stating that it was possible through the practices of Kundalini Yoga. Now, the difference is that when you practice yoga actually you are training the entire nervous system and the brain. This voluntary control is in no way detrimental to the human physiological system, but when we use the drugs, of course we are stimulating our brain but the nervous system as a whole and the cerebral cortex are completely affected chemically.

It should be understood that through the practices of yoga and meditation the consciousness in general can be evolved no doubt, but at the same time, the mental capacity can also be kept intact. This practice of yoga about which I am talking will take about half an hour, every day, and that is the maximum needed. What exactly should you be doing during that half an hour? I can tell you that briefly. Of course there are many ways and it is not possible for me to tell you all about them in this short meeting, but a few practices come to mind which I can mention now.

Firstly, if you concentrate in the center between the two eyebrows you will have experiences, and these experiences are spiritual, and they are also very good for the development of the brain in general. These practices should not be done for

more than fifteen minutes a day. Another practice is concentration on or awareness of your own breath. You do not have to do anything except to sit down as you are sitting now, you do not even have to close your eyes, nothing to be done, just be aware that you are breathing in and you are breathing out. Be completely and constantly aware of this process for about fifteen minutes, to half an hour, that is all. Even if you are facing difficulties in life, even if you are facing distractions in life, even if you have great turmoil within your mind, it does not matter. Even in a few moments everything will calm down. The whole turbulence will calm down and you will experience not only peace of mind, but also the great spiritual experience. The third practice is with open eyes to concentrate on any luminous spot such as the flame of a candle and then close your eyes and follow the internal dot or the internal reflection as long as it is possible, that is all.

Now these are the three systems I have put before you, and there are many more which should be chosen according to our evolution. In conclusion, I can tell you that I am not against the use of drugs but I can tell you that the purpose for which one uses drugs is never fulfilled, but the purpose for which one practices yoga, is fulfilled. If one has been using drugs for relaxation and tranquility, there is the corresponding yoga of psychic sleep known as yoga nidra. It is not only beneficial for tranquility and calmness of mind; it also develops the mental faculties in general. Experiments with yoga should be undertaken by everyone in order to gain more experiences and to reach higher in spiritual life.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Meeting with a Paramahansa

Rishi Arundhati

Rishi Arundhati gives a brief account of Sri Swamiji's visit to Vienna Yoga Center and the Satyanandashram of Tantra in 1971.

When Swamiji arrived in Vienna, we had established the yoga activity there after returning from Belfast. When Swamiji arrived, Swami Amritananda and others arrived with him from London. Sometime after they had arrived, Swamiji called me aside and told me that the young lady in the party traveling with him was going to want to sleep in my room. That I was to tell her she was to sleep in the hall with the others who were attending the seminar.

That evening Swamiji gave satsang in his room, all of us seated on the floor around him. At the end of the satsang, the young lady asked Swamiji if she could sleep in his room. He answered, "Well, maybe." I thought, "Swamiji! You told me to tell her no." Then after a short silence Swamiji said, "But of course you must ask Arundhati, that is her job." So of course I told her she should sleep in the hall with the others." Which she did. This was lesson nine. Have complete trust in Guru, and just be there for him.

Many people from different countries came for the Chakra Seminar. Swami Devatmananda from Paris, Swami Janakananda from Denmark, Swami Brahmananda from south France were among many of those attending the week long programs.

Swamiji gave 8 sessions on the chakras. Each chakra was described completely and then a practice for locating the chakra was given. Gradually building a sadhana that gave special attention to each of the chakras. This culminated in a sadhana about 45 minutes

in length and its practices are really well rounded and suitable to everyone.

When Swamiji had been in Vienna before in 1969 he gave an introduction to ajapa japa. He called it, Meditation on the Unconscious. Basically it was ajapa japa, except we did not have to count; Swamiji told us when to go on to the next practice. For four days this visit in 1971, Swamiji taught ajapa japa, starting slowly and finally teaching us to use a mala and counting for ourselves the number of rounds of the different practices. Also antar mouna was taught over four days and this time Swamiji gave us all the different stages of this practice. In 1969, he had taught us the first two stages and told us to practice them till he came again and he would teach us the complete practice. He said if we mastered the first two stages the remaining stages would be easy.

Swamiji spent the last couple of days of his stay in Vienna this time with the Keyserlings, visiting their school. When Swamiji left Vienna, he left Swami Amritananda with us.

Hari Om Tat Sat

The fifth series of nine lectures were given in Vienna, Austria, the first lecture at the Afro-Asian Institute, and the remaining eight lectures on the Chakras and their corresponding meditational practices were given during a week-long intensive seminar at the Satyananda Ashram of Tantra, which was organized by Rishis Arundhati and Vasishtha. The series is preceded by a short introduction to Sri Swamiji's lecture on Kriya Yoga by Rishi Vasishtha which also introduces the Chakra Seminar to take place the following week.

The first lecture of the series is on Kriya Yoga whose full title in the original German program can be translated as: "The Enobling, Transformation and Deepening of Every-day Consciousness through the Methods of Kriya Yoga." Sri Swamiji gives a clear

and precise statement of the philosophy at the basis of Kriya Yoga. He also points out that evolution of consciousness can only be depicted by experiences during deeper states of awareness in meditation. Hence the use of the psychic structure of the Chakras, Nadis, etc. in Yoga and Tantra which serve both theoretical and practical or pragmatic purposes. In closing he states that Kriya Yoga is intended for householders and proceeds to introduce the subsequent Chakra Seminar as four intensive days of preliminary practice for the awakening of the chakras. There are some superb sections and some unique insights in Sri Swamiji's lecture which have either disappeared or tend to get lost in the longer sections of the later books on Kriya Yoga published by BSY.

The next eight lectures and their corresponding meditations are a verbatim record of the complete Chakra Seminar. We have relegated all satsangs he gave and practices he taught during his tours involving Europe to later volumes of this series of teachings, except in this case where the meditations were an integral part of the seminar, or in cases where lectures were short on their own and which are therefore extended by the following brief satsang. In the Chakra Seminar Sri Swamiji gave a lecture on a chakra in the morning, followed by a meditation related to the lecture and the chakra. The same method would be repeated for the next chakra in the evening and so on for three more days.

Introduction to Lecture on Kriya Yoga and Chakra Seminar

Swami Vasishthananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

Blessed spiritual friends,

I want to welcome you in the name of the Vienna Satyananda Yoga Center and our host the Afro-Asian Institute to today's lecture by Swami Satyananda Saraswati. Swamiji is now here in Vienna for the fourth time and also his first talk in 1968 took place here.

At that time he gave a lecture on meditation in general, and prepared the Viennese public, or at least those who were interested in yoga, for the subsequent programs which he had been planning years ahead.

In the meantime much has happened. A number of ashrams and yoga centers came into being throughout Europe. These ashrams have a platform, or have created the possibility for Swamiji to bring us more and more of the lost wisdom of India. But he brought it in such a way that what he presented, the theory that he propounded, could be related by us to our daily consciousness and our daily experiences.

That is why his first lecture was about meditation, in which there occur no Sanskrit terms, and which has

remained a classic to this day, and it is still read even by yoga teachers.

This year Swamiji is on a European tour. First he was in London, then in Belfast, then in Copenhagen. Thereafter, he went to Paris and now, at the end of his tour he has come to Vienna.

This year Swamiji has chosen a topic that is becoming increasingly relevant, and throughout the capital cities

of Europe he has presented different aspects of this famous Tantric teaching in a form in which it was hitherto not known in the west.

Tantra is the theory or philosophy and also the practice which makes it possible for us to understand yoga, not in the context of monk hood or renunciation of the world. The Tantric texts, of which only one has been translated into a European language, and there



exist hundreds of them, but in our tradition only sixty four, constitute a scientific collection of the viewpoints which the Indians developed at the peak of their culture, even before the time of Christ, so that these yoga techniques would become applicable for all people, whatever be their way of life, be they monks, be they married, be they businessmen, no matter what their position is in life. According to tantra there are methods for all to transform their consciousness, to be rid of his complexes, to live healthily, and to discover aspects of his personality that are hidden from the average person.

Yoga, as we see it in the west has rather produced more neuroses than it has removed. On the whole, if one regards those who practice yoga in the west it is a rather negative advertisement for yoga than a positive one. Swamiji explains this as a result of people who are not monks, practicing a form of yoga that is meant for monks, and the reverse. Everyone, regardless of their vocation and status in life has the ability and opportunity to evolve himself further, to develop his personality further, and to transform his consciousness, to find peace, to be healthy and to be happy. But the methods for different people, who have taken different paths through life, must be different accordingly.

The classical yoga texts that have been brought to the west can only be properly understood on the basis of Tantra so that we can apply them appropriately in our present modern culture. For example, they have to be understood properly so that we produce neither neurosis about food, because we think that there are many things we should not eat, nor other neuroses, which result from the belief that

we can in this way eradicate the neuroses that we wish to remove. But the results exhibited by those who practice yoga in the west are rather negative. Therefore, there has always been strong criticism of yoga, yoga practitioners and yoga schools in the west. One of the questions is whether yoga is selfish. If one practices yoga, does one have to move to a cave in the Himalayas and cease to have anything to do with other human beings? If so, one then immerses oneself in oneself and discovers Reality. Is that not selfish?

Near to us people are starving, they are hungry. How can that be the correct way to realization? This misconception arises from the fact that, by historical accident, the texts that were brought to the west were brought by Christian monks or priests. They were interested in those texts that suited their celibate way of life. The Patanjali *Yoga Sutras*, the best known text on so called Raja Yoga, or mental discipline, was meant for monks who were celibate. Even the *Gherand Samhita* and the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, the best known texts on so called Hatha Yoga, were intended for monks. But there are enough texts on yoga in Tantra which are suited for those who are not monks or renunciates. The negative results of the practice of yoga one can observe in yoga practitioners in the west have resulted from this historical accident.

To counteract the misconceptions about yoga and the resulting inappropriate behaviors which are based on these misconceptions and to make the beneficial effects of the practice of yoga available to everyone, both in the east and the west, is the mission to which Swamiji has devoted himself. His aim is to bring genuine

Tantric wisdom to the west in such a way that it is not an abstract, scholastic presentation, but in a form that makes it possible for any person with the usual education as it is taught in the west can understand what is being stated.

So that is the program for the coming year and that which follows. In the next few years the activities of the International Yoga Fellowship and its affiliated ashrams and yoga schools will be concerned to correct and elaborate the existing knowledge about yoga and about the practices of yoga in the light of Tantric science.

Tomorrow we will begin an intensive program at the Vienna Satyananda Yoga Center, programs may be had if you do not have one yet, and it begins with a seminar about the psychic centers and the psychic nature of man. This seminar will only accommodate fifty participants, at present we have about forty that have signed up, so if someone wishes to join after the lecture, they should report to Swami Arundhati, in the orange dress at the back of the lecture hall. This course or seminar is only accessible to those who have registered. It will take place from 6:30 to 8 o'clock in the morning, and from 7:30 to 9 o'clock in the evening. Since the seminar will take a full week, the hours have been arranged in order for working people to be able to attend the sessions before and after working hours. All other programs that are mentioned on the main program sheet are open to all, and the expenses will be covered by voluntary contributions of those attending. With this I would like to present Swami Satyananda Saraswati to you and turn the floor over to him.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Ennobling, Transforming, Deepening the Day-to-Day Consciousness Through the Method of Kriya Yoga Introduction to Chakra Seminar

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Afro-Asiatisches Institut,

Vienna, Austria, March 23, 1971

Blessed spiritual friends,

It is after two years that we are again meeting in the same place in order to know more about the great science of yoga. Every time I come to the West I discover a new dimension of the personality of the people here, which perhaps many westerners and also many easterners have failed to discover. My discovery is the psychic and the spiritual West which is hidden under the cover of the material face. When I came to the west for the first time in 1968, I was only mentioning and teaching the yoga asanas and the pranayama, the physical aspects of yoga. But every time I return I find that the Hatha Yoga, yoga asanas and pranayamas are necessary for the western people, but the western man, the minds and hearts of these people, are definitely ready for a greater stride.

During my last tour and during this trip the enthusiasm of the people towards Kriya Yoga,



Kundalini Yoga, and Tantra Yoga in general has been overwhelming and as a result of this here in Vienna I have especially accepted to conduct a seminar, or rather a regular class on the chakras, that is, the psychic centers of Kundalini Yoga. Before I go on to discuss the main topic may I tell you now at this moment that all the aspects of yoga which you have learned from the books are an offshoot of a great forgotten and forsaken science and that science and the philosophy is Tantra which may be called the father or the mother of all the systems of yoga which you have come to know from the books and the teachers.

In the science of Tantra from where we have obtained the practices of Hatha Yoga, yoga exercises, pranayama, antar mouna, the science of Nada Yoga and many other systems of yoga, there is another very important system which is known as Kriya Yoga. In all other forms of yoga the aspirant is expected to concentrate his mind on one particular point which is the center. Without concentrating the mind, or without bringing the mind to one central point, it is said that he cannot attain, he cannot accomplish the yoga. But it is not so in Kriya Yoga. In Kriya Yoga the belief is that without concentration, without bringing your mind to one point, you can still bring about the required change in your every day consciousness.

In every branch of yoga, one-pointedness of mind is stressed and it is said that whenever the mind leaves that point you withdraw the mind back again to the point of focus, to the point of concentration. But what is said in Kriya Yoga is just the opposite of this. It is said that if your mind is wandering, if it goes out of focus, let it go, it is much better. Even if your consciousness,

even if your mind, is trying to attain one-pointedness of mind, do not accept that as a perfect condition, the mind should be left to wander. This is the peculiarity of Kriya Yoga in which there is practically no effort made but it is through certain exercises that are internal inflections that the consciousness is spontaneously brought to a point of awareness.

It is said in Kriya Yoga that it is not the concentration which is important, it is not the one-pointedness of mind which is important, but it is the change or it is an evolution in the state of your everyday consciousness which is important, because Kriya Yoga believes in the evolution of consciousness. This is a new dimension in the field of yoga, which is a wonderful contribution of Kriya Yoga and this is what I will be presenting to you this evening

The individual consciousness is evolving in every being and there has never been a static moment in the life of any individual. This is the fundamental principle or philosophy which we believe. The internal consciousness of every individual for whom the body and the mind and the senses are carriers or vehicles is subject to evolution on a natural plane and there is a great natural law that controls or conducts that evolution. The body and the mind and the senses are just the outer carriers or coverings of this consciousness. This evolution in the structure of consciousness is a very subtle affair. It can only be depicted by experiences during the deeper states of awareness in meditation.

Otherwise, the intellectual evolution or the emotional evolution, or the mental evolution or the evolution in the dimensions or in the field of the senses

can never give us any idea about the change or about the evolution that is taking place in the realm or in the dimension of the Self, or the consciousness or the Atman. The consciousness which is to be understood is something which is only a matter of greater and deeper awareness. But even though you do not know anything about this consciousness, this Atman, it is evolving and in the course of time, maybe in the span of centuries or thousands of years, the consciousness will evolve to full-fledged awareness.

In the practices of Kriya Yoga or in the practices in Kundalini Yoga, and also in Tantra Yoga, there is the belief that instead of trying for dissolution of your consciousness, you should try to aid your consciousness to evolve. According to the philosophy of Kriya Yoga, Kundalini Yoga or Tantra Yoga, matter and consciousness, though they appear to be two, are only one, or consciousness is an off-spring of matter. On the basis of this material body, on the basis of the material brain, the gross body and the gross brain, you can develop a higher consciousness, or you can manifest a higher consciousness, gradually according to the practices.

This gross body which is supposed to be walking, talking and sleeping and understanding can do something else also and there are greater possibilities, greater potentialities, concerning the process of knowledge and experience. Therefore, the psychic centers in this body must be awakened so that by the awakening of the psychic centers in the body we are able to influence the deeper realms or the deeper layers of our brain. In this physical body, which you see in front you, we have very many centers and they are

the centers which are the landmarks in the process of our personal evolution in the micro-cosmos and also in the macro-cosmos.

Below the sacral region of the body we have seven lower centers of consciousness which pertain to the manifestation of animal consciousness or instinctive consciousness. The mythological concept is that there are seven underworlds, underneath this our human state of consciousness, below this state of consciousness where we are at the moment. Below this state of consciousness there are seven states of consciousness which man has already passed through. Even now, in the case of many human beings, these lower instinctive centers are still functioning. There are numerous human beings all over the world who are alternating between the instinctive centers and the psychic centers known as Muladhara, etc. , and thus they are manifesting these qualities in their own life.

The consciousness has to be directed, the consciousness has to be evolved or the consciousness has to be awakened from the Muladhara center upwards and it should not be allowed to go downwards or to move to the underground worlds. The consciousness can fall, and that has been the fall of the individual, and the consciousness can awaken and ascend and this is the ascension of consciousness. Consciousness can transcend the limitations of time and space and that is called super-knowledge or the higher knowledge. These are the three stages that are the destiny of every individual. When the consciousness falls down then it is subject to instincts, to automatic behaviors and it is also subject to ignorance or *avidya*. Listen

carefully, it is at this moment that all those diseases, all that sickness comes up which the psychologists have been talking about. All these psychological complexes or these psychological errors can only exist up to the point where you have not been able to transcend the level of instinct. Once you have come up to Muladhara and you are making headway to Swadhisthana, the psychological problems will never stay in the pattern of your consciousness.

Now you can understand that if the consciousness can be released out of these instinctive levels, the chakras below, and if it is made to go upwards in the ascending order, we are not only practicing a spiritual exercise or a mystic or an occult exercise, we are also trying to work out the problems that are invariably connected with our personality, with our mind, due to which we know that we are full of grief and sorrow. The problem of consciousness should be tackled by concentration on the different psychic centers and at the same time by making headway from Muladhara up to the highest centers in the brain. In the highest centers in the brain we have different sections concerning different faculties of evolution. In order to awaken those centers it is very important that we tackle each chakra independently, individually.

According to the science of Kundalini Yoga it is said that we have 72,000 to 300,000 mediums or channels for the circulation of the consciousness throughout the body, and this consciousness is the psychic consciousness, and these channels are psychic channels, not the gross channels such as the channels for radio-active waves and so on. Out of these 72,000

or 300,000 channels for the conducting of psychic consciousness we have ten important main streams of psychic consciousness. Out of these ten main channels of psychic consciousness the most important one is known as Brahma Nadi, which is known as the central canal in our physiological system. Apart from this Brahma Nadi we have three other important channels for the conducting the psychic personality. There is one channel which is responsible for the conducting of the mental functions. There is another one which is responsible for the conducting of the vital activities in the body. It is these nadis or it is those channels of psychic consciousness which have to be awakened so that throughout the body an awakening or rejuvenation can take place.

Now this is the philosophy behind the practices of Kriya Yoga about which I gave an introduction at the beginning. According to the Tantric system, Kriya Yoga is meant for those people who are householders and have to work very hard in order to maintain their mental, intellectual, emotional and social conditions. The practices of Kriya Yoga are also meant for those people who want to get rid of the mental problems or the psychological problems of their personality.

During these four days that I will be here, we will be having the preliminary practices on the psychic centers because it is very important that before Kriya yoga is taken up one must have a good knowledge about the psychic body or the psychic complex, or the psychic centers; what they mean and what their influence is on the human system.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Chakra Seminar: Ajna Chakra Theory and Practice

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

Our reflection on the psychic centers starts from the Ajna chakra. As per the regular tradition we should have started the reflections from Muladhara since the source from where the energy or the Shakti rises is in Muladhara chakra.

But, there is also another tradition in which the study and the reflection about the chakras starts from the Ajna center, because it is said in almost all Tantric scriptures that Ajna is the confluence of the three rivers, the three channels, Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati about which you might have already heard a little.

The three great forces the Ida, the Pingala and the Sushumna, are considered according to mythology to be the three great rivers, Ganga, a well known river, much hallowed by Hindus and Yamuna, on the banks of which Lord Krishna spent a few years of his life, and Saraswati, a river which is not seen but which flows underground.

There is a place in India which is now known as Allahabad, but its ancient name is Prayag, where these three rivers are supposed to meet, and at the confluence

the swamis and the yogis and the householders take baths once every twelve years when according to the astronomical situation the sun is at a particular zodiacal point. That happens not once a year but once every twelve years. It is at that time that millions of people gather at the confluence and take baths. Just because they feel that at this particular time there is the nectarine flow, the flow of nectar, and if they take baths they will be purified. That is the mythological part of the story.

The Ajna chakra is the Prayag for yogis because it is the confluence of the three great forces.

The man, that is, the individual consciousness that you have, has to take a dip at the point of confluence of the three great forces. It also means that you can take a dip in any of the rivers, either the Ida or the Pingala or in Saraswati. But when the mind is fused, when the mind is concentrated at the point of Ajna then the mind undergoes a process of great transformation due to the fact that it comes in contact with these three great forces.

The three nadis, Ida, Pingala and Sushumna flow in two directions. I will not give you the physiological names at this moment because it will be a departure from the mystical occult tradition.

The Ida, Pingala and Sushumna flow in two directions:

1. They flow to the brain, i.e., they flow towards Sahasrara; and
2. They flow to the whole being. Not only the physical being but also the mental, intellectual, emotional, psychic and possibly other aspects of being.

It is not only the physical body but also the mental body, the psychic, the intellectual or astral body which

is penetrated by these great forces, Ida, Pingala and Sushumna.

Thus this particular centre is a very important centre where you must be able to have an experience, just like you have a bath, so that the mind is greatly purified. When mind is purified then you can start with other chakras.

There is a problem as you know with other chakras, though maybe you are not aware of it. Each and every chakra contains a bundle or a magazine of karmas or samskaras, good and bad both. Or one might say positive and negative both or painful and pleasant both.

The awakening of a chakra will definitely bring to the surface an explosion or expression of those karmas and samskaras. When these samskaras or karmas express themselves at the time of awakening of the particular chakra naturally not everybody can face them. There are people who have reason, who have understanding, they can face the karmas and samskaras but not everybody can face them. Therefore, it is said before you start awakening the great force and manifesting it, it is better to purify this mind at the point of confluence of Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati so that it is purified and with that purified mind then you go to other chakras and therefore we start with Ajna.

The name Ajna comes from the root to know and to obey and to follow. Literally the word *Ajna* means command. Ajna chakra is also known as the Guru chakra because this is the centre where the inner guru resides. You must have heard about the internal guru and also about the external guru, the teacher, the preceptor. The internal guru has a centre and your communication with the external guru takes place at this particular centre. This centre is also connected with Jupiter,

according to astrology. Jupiter is guru, it is the Brihaspati, as they call him, the guru of the Devas. He is the preceptor of the Devas.

The center, Ajna is the center of command. Why do we say that this is the center of command? It has been said in many other books that when the conscious mind has been withdrawn and when the subconscious mind has also been withdrawn and when you have no external life of the senses and the mind and at the same time the light of the mind is also not available, how will you see? How will you hear and who will lead you through? This is the problem with the spiritual life.

If you are a beginner you may not face this problem at the moment but at a much later stage in spiritual life you will face this problem and that problem is much greater than the problems that you are facing at the moment. Presently you problems are just mental, distractions of mind, worries and anxieties, restlessness. But there will come a point at a higher stage of spiritual life when you will fall into unconsciousness.

The moment concentration takes place you become completely void. Your consciousness is completely reduced to the point of being void. It does not function. The ego becomes dormant for the time being. There is no 'I' consciousness. There is no ego consciousness. What happen then? You become quiet. You do not move further. There is a completely static condition of spiritual life.

In order to avoid that static condition in Ajna chakra the voice of the guru, the command of the guru is to be heard. When the night is dark, when you have gone deep into meditation, and you have lost everything concerning your ego or the individual self, it is at this moment that the instruction or the command of the guru is heard through this centre. Therefore, the name of this center is Ajna or the center of command.

I have made a small change to the traditional diagram of Ajna chakra. The upper three nadis have been eliminated from the traditional diagram, because, beyond Ajna there is neither Ida nor Pingala. But in all the traditional books they have these three nadis

VEREDLUNG VERWANDLUNG VERTIEFUNG

DES ALLTAGSBEWUSSTSEIN

DURCH DIE METHODEN DES

KRIYA YOGA

VORTRAG VON

SWAMI

SATYANANDA SARASWATI

AFRO-ASIATISCHES INSTITUT

WIEN IX TÜRKENSTR. 3

19:30

23 MÄRZ 1971

GEFÖRDERT DURCH DAS WIENER YOGA ZENTRUM KOMMÖDIENGASSE 3

WIEN II

TEL. 24 65 00

continuing upward. But at the same time it is also written in all these same books that Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati, Ida, Pingala and Sushumna, meet at the Ajna chakra. Beyond that they do not flow in the form of three. No! Therefore, we have made another chart with no connection, with no link in the form of channels. Otherwise in every case it is absolutely according to the Tantric tradition.

Ajna is directly connected with Muladhara chakra. Even as your telephone is directly connected to the exchange, in the same way, Muladhara and Sahasrara can directly contact each other. If any awakening takes place in Ajna chakra, it first takes place in Muladhara chakra. And anything taking place in Muladhara has to go to Ajna chakra. Therefore you will find that the triangle is the same as in Muladhara.

The inverted triangle is the symbol of creativity, creation, projection, manifestation and not of consciousness. And whenever you find an upright triangle it is the symbol of consciousness where there is no creativity, where there is no manifestation, no capacity of projection. There is only awareness "complete". So the upright triangle is the symbol of awareness and the inverted triangle is the symbol of creativity. Therefore, the inverted triangle is known as the mother-force. Of course mother, not the wife of my father, but mother force. It is the negative force. It is the creative force. In this way the Ajna chakra is very similar to Muladhara.

Within this creativity you find the Linga. It is called the Shiva-linga. According to many westerners, the Shiva-linga is supposed to be the symbol or the indication of the phallus. But this is absolutely wrong.

According to Tantra Shastra, according to the Shaiva metaphysics the Shiva-linga is the symbol of the astral

body. Let me be clear in my exposition, the word linga has two meanings in Sanskrit.

1. In the common language it stands for the male organ of generation, but
2. In the philosophical language the word linga stands for the astral body and *linga* means attribute.

What is your attribute? Well, it is male and female. That is what is said in Sanskrit. Who are you? What is your attribute? They answer masculine or feminine. Well, masculine and feminine are attributes of the body but what about the attributes of the mind. Mind has many attributes. Mind is not merely masculine or feminine. What is your emotional attribute? You cannot say masculine and feminine emotions. What is your intellectual attribute? You cannot say feminine and masculine intellect. So even as the body has two or three attributes, the masculine or feminine or mixed in the same way the mind, emotions, the intellect, more than that, the astral body has its own attributes.

According to Tantra, according to the occult science, the astral body is the attribute of your personality. If you are to say who you are, according to Tantra, you can not say I am a man or I am a woman. No! You will have to say that my actual personality is the Shiva-linga. Why is it like that?

You will always find Shiva-lingams in three colors:

1. In Muladhara it is the linga which is smoky. The content is smoke. It is in the form of a gaseous column,
2. In Ajna it is black,
3. In Sahasrara it is illumined.

Now these are the three states of astral consciousness. I do not mean the physical body please.

We mean neither the physical body nor the mental, nor the intellectual or nor emotional bodies; we are talking about the astral body.

Your astral body has to undergo, or it undergoes, three different stages of manifestation. That is to say, you can feel your astral body in three stages according to the depth of your sadhana, according to the depth of your concentration.

If you concentrate now and should your mind not be evolved, you will experience Shiva-linga in the form of smoke, as if it were a smoky column. It comes and then it disappears. It comes, again it disperses.

With deeper concentration, with the annihilation of the restlessness of mind it becomes black in color. And when you continue concentration on that black Shiva-linga then it becomes illumined. These three colors of the Shiva-linga represent three stages of purification or evolution of your astral consciousness. Dim astral consciousness, consolidated astral consciousness and illumined astral consciousness.

Illumined astral consciousness is known as Jyotir-linga. In Sahasrara the linga is known as Jyotir linga. In Ajna it is known as Itharacha-linga. In Muladhara it is known as Dhumri-linga, that is, the smoky linga.

So, the Shiva-linga should not at any cost be considered as the symbol of the organ of generation or what is called the phallus. No! Linga does not mean that, linga means astral body or the attributes of the astral body.

The attributes of the astral body are three:

1. Smoky—dim astral consciousness,
2. Solid—consolidated astral consciousness,
3. Illumined—illumined astral consciousness.

Therefore the Shiva-linga represents the astral consciousness of man. In whichever temple in India you find a Shiva-linga, you will always find a black Shiva-linga. You will never find a white Shiva-linga. Well you can get them in the market, true.

It is the black Shiva-linga which if you try to concentrate on it and then close your eyes, you will find a white column. If you concentrate on a white Shiva-linga and close your eyes, you will find a black column. That is the counterimage that is the counter effect of the Shiva-linga.

In all the temples of India you will only find the black Shiva-linga, because it is said that it is the symbol of Ajna. Within the creativity of man is situated the Shiva-linga as you find it in the diagram.

On all sides of the triangle you have the circle. The circle is known as chakram. Actually this is the chakram. *Chakra* means circle. It is absolutely round. This is the symbol of shunya the void. The Samadhi state or the state of super consciousness has three attributes. I am sure that I am clear, the highest state of consciousness can be understood in three ways, it has three attributes:

1. The first is void, which is known as shunya,
2. The second is consciousness that is called chaitanya,
3. The third is bliss that is known as anandam.

These are the three attributes of the highest consciousness in man. Out of these, the first attribute of Samadhi or higher stage, nirvana, is manifested or is symbolized by the circle. The circle is the symbol of complete void or you may say shunya. Shunya is a state of complete nothingness. It is a state where the empirical experiences do not penetrate or the worldly existence does not function, does not get in.

Inside the circle you have the word "OM" ॐ. This Om is a very peculiar Om with the tail at the top, with the moon and the star just at the top below it. This is the ancient and traditional Om as a matter of fact.

Om is what we call consciousness. This is the sound which belongs to Ajna chakra. Above that Om you have a moon and then the bindu. Then you have what is called raif on the top. Raif is the trace of consciousness; it is the trace of sound consciousness.

On both sides of the circle you have two petals. One is Ham and one is Ksham. They represent the two great powers. Shiva and Shakti. Ham and Ksham are the bija mantras for Shiva and Shakti.

Down below you have the three nadis, Ida, Pingala and between them Sushumna.

It is said that the color of Ajna chakra is completely clear; however I always find the color of Ajna chakra completely gray. Even in meditation when the manifestation of Ajna takes place you only find a completely gray color.

The concentration on Ajna chakra brings about a state of concentration, or of communication with the higher and deeper consciousness. It means that concentration on Ajna chakra develops a particular gland in the physical body which is known as the pineal gland, which is also known as the cavernous gland. It is also a part of the cerebrum in the physiological structure. Concentration on that particular center of the body releases many energies which are inherent in that part of the physical being.

But Ajna chakra is very difficult to concentrate upon. It is situated just at the top, at the termination of the spinal cord. Where the spinal cord ends, it is exactly at that point that Ajna chakra is situated in the

form of a knot, like a knot of a thread, and hence, is called granthi. The name of that knot, according to the Tantric tradition is Rudra-granthi, the knot of Shiva. The structure of Ajna chakra is like that of a knot.

This Ajna chakra is of course very subtle but its physiological base is in the pineal gland, in the cavernous structure, it is in the cerebrum on the top of the spinal cord.

The powers and potentialities of this particular gland manifest in two different directions:

1. Communication with your inner self,
2. Communication with the external world.

It is something like the central exchange from where you can have contact with your inner self, with your astral body, with your guru, your internal guru. Secondly you can also have communication with other people in the form of telepathy, clairvoyance and so forth.

The Ajna chakra is highly active in animals but since they cannot express themselves we do not know much about it. Also in female bodies the Ajna chakra is more active than it is in the male body. The feeling of coming events, the sensing of the happenings to come in life are peculiar to women and it is through this Ajna chakra that they are able to have this kind of experience.

Since the concentration on Ajna is very difficult we have in Tantra and yoga a system, a centre that is known as *brumadhya*, eyebrow center or middle of the eyebrows. It is exactly in front, in between the two eyebrows in the place where Indian ladies put a red mark or the pundits or the Brahmins put the mark of sandal.

The center between the two eyebrows can be contacted in various ways. There is one way which is known as *Shambhavi*. *Shambhavi* means: With your eyes open, you draw your pupils to the center so that

they go up to look at the eyebrow centre. The eyes remain open but the two eyes are centralized in the eyebrow center. With this there is the manifestation of a light spot inside. If you go on seeing that spot it is concentration on Ajna.

A second way is to place some kind of ointment like Tiger Balm in the eyebrow center. When you place that ointment there, concentrate on the pressure point and gradually the pressure point increases and the sensations are carried to the pineal gland, to the Ajna chakra and this starts working. But in this case it starts working in the form of visions and internal experiences.

The third way is to concentrate on the different nadis which will be explained later. That is also a way to contact Ajna chakra.

As a sadhana the most suitable and practical way for the discovery of Ajna chakra should be chosen. It is no use to concentrate on Ajna chakra without knowing the location, and this is a note of warning.

The brain has thousands and millions of supersonic and ultrasonic circuits which you know about from your modern physiology. Whenever you try to concentrate without knowing the point upon which you are concentrating maybe you concentrate on any arbitrary point and instead of awakening Ajna you may awaken some other center which might not have been enumerated in Tantra. Each and every circuit in the brain has great potential. It is the medium of manifestation of qualities, mental, intellectual, emotional and psychic.

You may see a monster, well seeing a ghost or a monster is not very bad but there are people who are afraid, who say, No! What is happening? What is going wrong? So without discovering the center of Ajna there is no use trying to press hard on that structure of your

head because it may happen by chance that when you are concentrating on Ajna on the basis of your practise of meditation, the pressure may fall on some other center.

The pressure may fall on many other centers which may or may not be very pleasant and therefore, the first thing that we should do is something for the awakening or I should say for the discovery of Ajna chakra.

What do I mean by discovery? You have to discover the center Ajna by actually feeling it. You may not be able to show me where it is, but it will become clear to you just by one sensation and that sensation will remain there. On that sensation you have to concentrate and on that sensation you have to superimpose the sound OM, because the bija mantra, the sound of Ajna chakra is OM. That is the *nada*, that is the sound, that is the symbol. Om is the sound. So first of all you will have to feel the sensation or the particular feeling. You do not have to try, it will have to come by itself. You should not try. You have to use a method which will develop that sensation in you without your trying. Again, you should not try to find out where Ajna center is. There is a way which I will explain.

As I said, Muladhara is directly connected with Ajna. In Hatha Yoga texts you must have read that the contraction of the anus is known as ashwini mudra. Movement of the anus is known as ashwini mudra and contraction is known as mulabandha. This is incorrect. For many years I was also under the same impression but when I went through the books on Tantra I had to correct this mistake. Contraction of the anus or movement of the anus has nothing to do with mulabandha or with any of the kriyas. Those books must be revised.

Mulabandha means contraction of the perineum, and the perineum and the anus, according to physiology and also according to yoga, are two different sections of the body. Of course when you contract the perineum the anus is contracted in the beginning because you have no separate control over these two sections. When you contract your lower abdomen the upper abdomen is also contracted. It is because you do not have control over the involuntary systems.

Now the anus and the perineum are involuntary systems. Naturally, when you contract the perineum the anus also gets contracted. So, mulabandha is contraction of the perineum.

In the same way ashwini mudra is contraction and relaxation, contraction and release of the perineum. The perineum is the place which is the seat for Muladhara chakra, in the masculine body. In the feminine structure it is not the perineum, it is the cervix which is the centre of Muladhara chakra. Therefore, the contraction or ashwini mudra involves the cervix. The lowest portion of the uterus and on its posterior side according to the tradition is the centre Muladhara, or the gland Muladhara, or the knot, which is known as Brahma-granthi which I will explain further on.

Now it is these two centres, either the perineum or the cervix which you have to activate first if you want to discover Ajna. There is no other proper way. Even if there are other proper ways they may be too difficult for us at this stage. Or maybe by chance you may be able to develop the sensation in Ajna by some different means.

But otherwise, the systematic way is to awaken, to activate Muladhara chakra or the centre of the perineum or the centre of the cervix.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Sadhana for Ajna Chakra

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

Ashwini Mudra

Please turn off the lights.

Close your eyes,

And those who can manage to sit in siddhasana may sit in siddhasana.

Even if you are not able to sit in siddhasana you should press your perineum with one heel.

That is the half siddhasana.

If full siddhasana is possible that is alright, but if it is not possible

then you have to press the perineum with one of your heels.

Whichever you feel is comfortable.

There are two asanas which you have to remember

One is known as siddhasana and the other is known as siddhayoniasana.

Siddhasana concerns the male members and siddhayoniasana concerns the female body.

In both cases the placement of one of the heels is the same.

Both hands should be on the knees. The index finger should be at the root of the thumb,

and the other three fingers, the middle, ring and little finger should be together

but separate from these two.

Thus you place both your hands on the knees palms upward.

This is the position of the hands with siddhasana or

siddhayoniasana and it is called chinmudra.

With the hands in chinmudra you sit and your spinal cord is straight.

Your eyes are closed and you are not wearing glasses.

When you close your eyes you must remember only one thing.

That you should be sure that you are not pressing the eyelids unconsciously.

Because many aspirants at the time of meditation press the eyelids unconsciously in a strain.

That is not the correct method.

So you should see that your eyes are mildly closed.

When your eyes are closed there must be a center inside, an imaginary center

where they should remain fixed.

This is important in relation to future work in meditation.

The best place where you can centralize, where you can stabilize your eyesight,

is either in the eyebrow center or the tip of the nose.

This you have to experience yourself.

You are either trying to establish your sight on the nose tip or the eyebrow center.

One of the heels is pressing the perineum.

It is at this pressure on the perineum that you have to contract slightly physically,

and then release the contraction.

The seat of the perineum which is pressed by the heel, should be contracted, with concentration

and then release of the contraction.

Now this contraction and expansion should be continued for sometime.

When you contract and relax the contraction you should do it with awareness.

You should know that you are doing it.

Contract Release

Contract Release

Contract Release

Continue this way yourself.

Do not use force just a slight contraction is sufficient.

The contraction and relaxation can even be done on the rhythm of the natural breath.

But do not strain very much and do not move your body for another ten minutes.

Awareness of Muladhara and contraction and relaxation, either with or

without the rhythm on the natural breath.

This contraction and relaxation should be done fifty times to begin with.

Now, go on practicing yourself and also go on counting, but you should do it with a mala.¹

You should begin with fifty times and with awareness please.

Complete awareness of Ashwini mudra. ca 4 minutes

The speed of the natural breath should be the speed of the contraction and relaxation,

Neither slower nor faster. ca 3 minutes

Awareness of Muladhara and of the contraction and relaxation taking place

On the rhythm of the natural breath.

Ingoing breath is contraction and outgoing breath is relaxation

and everything is happening in Muladhara chakra in the form of ashwini mudra.

ca 3 minutes

Chanting Om together.

O O O M M M M

O O O M M M M

O O O M M M M

Hari Om Tat Sat

Relax yourself . . .

Open your eyes . . .

Turn on the light.¹

Footnote: 1. A rosary of beads for counting, consisting usually of one hundred and eight beads.

Chakra Seminar: Muladhara Chakra Theory and Practice

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

The basic psychic centre is Muladhara chakra which is also known as Adhara padma. *Mul* means root, *adhara* means basis. *Adhara Padma* also means the root lotus.

It is said that it is Muladhara, because it is the basis of the great nature which is responsible for the evolution of consciousness into the higher worlds. The word *mula* means root, but here it should be understood as mula prakriti.

The concept of *mula prakriti* in Sankhya stands for the transcendental basis of physical nature. The evolved manifestation that you see in front of you must have some basis, and after dissolution the whole universe which you see, or all the objects which you see must go back to their original source. What happens after disintegration of matter? Where does it return to? The original source of all natural evolution is known as mula prakriti.

It is mula prakriti which is responsible for whatever is happening in you. Therefore, Muladhara means the basis of mula prakriti. As such this chakra is very important in the sense that it is the seat of the great potential kundalini.

It is said in all the texts that in Muladhara, the great potential is lying absolutely quiet. It is sleeping and coiled like a snake. When aroused it makes its way to the Sushumna, through the spinal cord. Therefore, awakening and vitalization of Muladhara chakra is considered to be of very great importance in Kundalini Yoga.

Since Muladhara chakra is the seat of mula prakriti, the great Shakti, which is also known as kundalini, naturally all the great forces are there. When the awakening of kundalini takes place everything comes

out in the form of expressions. When the earthquake takes place it brings many things from beneath the earth. In the same way the awakening of kundalini is also the awakening of many other things which are lying in the unconscious field of human existence about which we have no knowledge whatsoever.

All the karmas, the seeds of life, of many live or of this life are lying embedded in the great sheet or ocean of unconsciousness and that is Muladhara.

Muladhara is known as one of the most important, exciting but disturbing psychic centers. Therefore, the



awakening of Ajna chakra should take place before the awakening of Muladhara chakra as mentioned in the previous lecture.

In the Muladhara chakra you find the inverted red triangle which is the symbol of Shakti or the creative energy, which is the productivity and the multiplicity of everything. So, it is said in all the Tantric scriptures that Shakti is the creator and Shiva is only awareness.

Within the triangle you have the Shiva-linga or the symbol of the astral body. It is girdled by a serpent.

In Kundalini Yoga the serpent is the symbol of time. In Hindu mythology and in the Sankhya system the snake stands for eternity or the concept of time.

Those of you who know of the great Vishnu reclining of the many hooded serpent in paradise, that is a concept of time. Therefore, another name for the serpent in Sanskrit is also *Maha Kala* which means the great time.

The kundalini is lying in the womb of unconsciousness. It is beyond time and it is beyond space. When manifested it is subject to time and space and that is the act of awakening of the serpent.

It is supported by an elephant with seven trunks. The seven trunks here denote the seven minerals which are vital to the body and the loss of which means a vital loss to the human body. In Sanskrit they are known as *sapta dhatu*. This seven trunked elephant carries the great mind, it carries the great creativity, and the quadrangle which you see is the yantra.

Yantra is something which is the symbol of a particular psychic energy. Each and every individual has a physical body, but behind this physical body he has the mental, the intellectual, the emotional and many other personalities. Each and every body has its own constituents.

The physical body has the nerve centre, hemoglobin's, oxygen, carbon, etc., which you know too well to be mentioned here.

In the same way the astral body, the psychic body, or the great unconscious is also an aggregate of symbols and these symbols are all geometrical. It seems that one personality of the human being is only a collection or assemblage or congregation of geometrical signs.

Another personality of man seems to be a congregation or aggregate of different kinds of sound vibrations as if man is existing in a world of sound and nothing else but sounds.

Even as when you dream at night you manifest yourself in a psychic field, in the same way, there are other bodies into which one definitely and certainly can manifest oneself.

What if it should happen that consciousness manifests in us that is entirely made up of sounds, or *shabda* or *nada* vibrations? Vibrations within a certain range are perceptible and audible. Beyond and below that range they are not perceptible and not audible.

Now if you happen to enter into that dimension of you personality which is made up of sound vibrations how would you feel yourself? You would only hear nada, shabda, sounds, notes many, many things. In the same way there is a personality of man which seems to be nothing but mathematics or geometry. There everything is quadrangle, triangle, inverted and upright triangles or points, circumference, circles, arch, tangents and many other things. What do these geometrical signs indicate? Of course we are familiar with them from our mathematics books but here in the personality it seems that these yantras are responsible for making a particular form of you consciousness and then stretching it out.

It is as if you go to a tank of water and you take out a gallon, or take out a bucket full. You will bring the water out, according to the size of your bucket. In the same way the personality is full of these symbols. Out of these symbols you pick out one for yourself and that will be the pattern of your consciousness. There are thousands and there are even millions of these symbols and as far as I can understand, if you happen to go to that state of your being, you will find nothing but peculiar geometrical signs.

Please remember that this is not the only dimension of human personality. The human being simultaneously exists in infinite dimensions. It is not one dimension. These dimensions, in which we are existing at the moment are the physical, the mental, the intellectual and somewhat in the emotional also, but not much since we are not very emotional. So in this context, the yantra is that part of the human personality which belongs to his occult dimension. In English we say occult, in Sanskrit we say Tantric.

The word yantra means, conceiving and liberating respectively. The word *yantra* literally means to conceive and to liberate. So it means; you conceive your consciousness in a particular geometrical form and then you liberate it.

So in each and every chakra there is one yantra. This quadrangle is the yantra. The triangle is not the yantra but it is the symbol of Shakti within which the creator, the astral consciousness is residing.

From Muladhara, three important nadis emerge. These nadis should also be understood. Very frankly, nerves and nadis are two different things although nadis have been translated this way. Whenever we use the word nadi in Sanskrit they translate it in English

as nerve channel. That is not correct. The word nadi comes from the root *nad* which means to flow. So nadi does not mean the vehicle for flow, it means the flow itself. As such the nadis should not be considered as a part of matter. They should be understood as an event, as a process. Something is flowing but we do not know what that is. It is immaterial nadi so to say.

Out of 72,000 channels of psychic consciousness. or some yogis say, 300,000 channels of psychic consciousness, which are the channels through which you psychic consciousness is flowing all round like radio waves on certain planes. The three nadis known as Ida, Pingala and Sushumna are the most important.

Ida is said to emerge from the left side, Pingala is supposed to emerge from the right side and Sushumna is supposed to emerge from the centre of Muladhara. Of course, Sushumna goes through the central canal.

Within the Sushumna is another flow called Chitra. Within the Chitra there is another flow which is known as Brahma nadi and that is final as far as we know, a flow and within that another flow and within that another flow. Sushumna, subtler than that is Chitra and the subtlest which we know up to this time is Brahma. We are concerned with Sushumna because it is the container of the other two flows of consciousness.

Please remember that I am not talking about the material nadis but at the same time I am talking of immaterial flows that are definitely concrete like the radio waves, like many other things which are known in the technology of today.

This Sushumna nadi stretches from Muladhara straight-away to Ajna, there is no bending. But the Ida and Pingala move from the right and left sides respectively, make a curve like a bow and cross each

other at the next chakra and then go in opposite directions again making a curve and go to the opposite direction. This way they go on crossing each other at each of the chakras. Finally Pingala joins Ajna from the right and Ida joins Ajna from the left and that makes a beautiful passage.

Ida controls all mental function, psychic functions, reasoning, thinking and feeling. Pingala controls prana, dynamism, movement, such as speech. For instance, I am giving a speech which involves both nadis in action. I am thinking, that is the action of Ida, I am talking that is the action of Pingala. If I want to go to a certain place, I move, that is the action of Pingala, and I plan to move that is the action of Ida.

In order to maintain a balance between a process of thinking and acting, between a process of feeling and doing, Ida and Pingala have to join at each of the chakras. Ida and Pingala have to cross each other at every center in order to maintain a balance between the mental and the vital energies of man. Not only that, from physiology you know that from each center, from each chakra, there are many other nerves, thousands that are distributed throughout the body like a network of wires. The Ida, Pingala and Sushumna, these three are the most important psychic channels that emerge from the Muladhara chakra.

The seat of Muladhara should be understood. It has been written in the Tantric books, but somehow or the other, in India especially, the so called good men, pious men did not speak the truth. I do not believe that they did not know it but they did not say it.

The seat of Muladhara in the masculine body is the perineum. It is slightly inside the perineum not exactly at the perineum. It is on the inner part of that nerve

which carries all kinds of sensations and is immediately connected with the testes.

In the feminine structure it is at the root of the uterus, at the mouth of the uterus but at the posterior side that is known as cervix.

But in both places, of course it is true, in both the places this particular gland (a term I will use for the time being) is like a knot, therefore in Sanskrit this particular Muladhara chakra is also known as granthi, a knot and this granthi is known as Brahma granthi, the knot of Brahma, the creator. It is said to be a knot because as long as it looks like a knot then everything is in confusion. But the moment the knot is relaxed the Shakti awakens.

There are three granthis in the body, three knots:

1. Brahma granthi,
2. Vishnu granthi,
3. Rudra granthi.

It is said in the books written by the great Tantric scholars that when these granthis or the knots are opened then the knowledge is revealed to the human being.

So, this Muladhara chakra is situated in this material body as an immaterial and transcendental force which is to be awakened. The process of awakening is not very difficult.

One can awaken Muladhara by thousands of methods but the easiest of all the methods is to concentrate on the tip of the nose. It is peculiar because the organ of sense, that is, the sensory cortex of Muladhara chakra is connected with the nose. At the same time the element that is to say the earth element to which Muladhara chakra belongs is immediately connected with the awareness of smell. Smell, nose,

Muladhara and the earth element are intimately connected with each other.

The quality and the attribute of the earth element is smell. As such the center of smell and the center of Muladhara chakra both are directly connected. Therefore, by concentration on the nose tip, the awakening in Muladhara takes place.

Awakening in Muladhara is not very difficult as I told you and the energy, the awakened Shakti again goes back to its bed chamber. This is also very easy. Quickly it wakes up and quickly it goes back.

Many aspirants have peculiar experiences concerning the awakening of Shakti and they are unnecessarily alarmed. I can assure each of you that the awakening is a great event no doubt. It does bring up the karmas from you unconscious or total unconscious but at the same time it does not last for very long.

Perhaps, in no one's life, the first awakening will be the last awakening. Sometimes the first awakening takes place and never the second one. Many times, in many people, this awakening can take place, bringing into manifestation many kinds of psychic powers such as levitation, etc. , because when the awakening takes place the astral body and the physical body are separated. When the astral body and the physical body are separated they are something like an airplane and the passengers inside. That levitation takes place first of all on the psychic and the mental field. This levitation may not necessarily be the physical levitation concerning the objects in space but this levitation is an astral experience which definitely takes place in many cases. This is what you have to remember.

At the same time the sensations, such as a creeping sensation through the spinal cord and so on are of

course a few symptoms of the awakening but in no case, except a few exceptions, the awakened energy can go beyond Manipura.

It is not possible. In many cases I have heard people say that the Shakti went directly to Sahasrara or Ajna chakra. Sensations do go, I completely agree but there is something immaterial, I am talking of something immaterial, an immaterial force. According to the Tantric texts Manipura is the stop. Up to Manipura the spiritual aspirant now has an access to kundalini.

Up to Manipura it will go, then back to Muladhara, up to Manipura, back to Muladhara, sleeps a number of times and of course if the sadhak or the aspirant is full of earnestness, sincerity or is obstinate as you call it, again and again trying the thing then the awakenings take place, a number of awakenings. Then only at Manipura the Shakti is released further.

Once the Shakti is released from Manipura it is finished. Thereafter, there is no block. Thereafter, there is no barrier. It is like your car on the highway, no red or green signals.



But up to Manipura it is not so. Therefore, in Buddhist scriptures it is said that Manipura is called Hara. *Hara* means from Manipura it is given a free way, no control over kundalini. According to Buddhist texts and according to a few Tantric texts the exact awakening takes place in Manipura.

It is true; there is no doubt, the actual awakening takes place in Manipura and not in Muladhara. Muladhara is the seat, Swadhisthana is the home and the awakening takes place in Manipura. It only means that from Manipura the awakening takes place without any stop whatsoever. In order to develop the system of Muladhara in yoga there are many exercises which every yoga aspirant should know and practice from now onwards, whether it is asanas, pranayama, mudras, bandhas, they are all very important for the awakening.

From Muladhara, if you go up to Swadhisthana, it is a very crucial period in one way. All the suppressed emotions in any form be it anger, greed, lust, passion, anything whatever will come out. It is during this moment that the guardianship, spiritual guardianship is considered very essential. Not because these eruptions are not going to take place, they do. But the eruptions take place before someone who knows that they are going to happen.

Otherwise, what will happen? You will be practicing Kundalini Yoga and all your anger will express itself, and you will say what is happening? I am practicing yoga, my passion, my greed, my moha, delusions, infatuations, everything is going up, and it is increasing when it should decrease.

Why is it increasing? People must know that at the time of clearance of the bowels by a medicine there is a purging. At the time of awakening of Muladhara

this is the danger unless you understand of course that the suppressed emotions come up. The sadhak becomes angry, he sleeps, or oversleeps, some times you can see him getting up at two o'clock and doing meditation, sometimes one o'clock, sometimes taking bath, sometimes talking too much and sometimes singing, sometimes getting angry and throwing things at others. Passion goes to the supreme degree, Oh! It is absolutely highest degree temperature.

It is at this moment of psychic cyclones or you may call it emotional cyclones that the guardianship of somebody who knows it is necessary. He will tell you this must happen and this is a part of evolution, and this is not a fall, this is not wrong.

Religious people say that it is a fall. Of course they say it, but the wise man will tell you it is not a fall. It is a state of your evolution where you have to bring these things out if you want to accelerate your evolution. But if you do not want to speed up your evolution, then everything goes very slow, in life after life you work out these problems.

This much in short about Muladhara chakra. Muladhara is the highest chakra of the lower chakras. It is the Sahasrara of the animal chakras. The lower chakras as I told you are:

1. Atala
2. Vitala
3. Sutala
4. Talatala
5. Rasatala
6. Mahatala
7. Patala

There are seven lower centers, the seventh one is Muladhara. When the undeveloped animal

consciousness is automatically evolving it comes to a point where it reaches the centre of Muladhara. In Muladhara the passion is supreme; the animal instincts are absolutely predominant. But in any case the divine Shakti is also there.

Now you understand that this is the seventh of the lower centers and first of the upper centers. This is a junction and the fall always takes place from Muladhara.

Muladhara may be considered as the Garden of Eden, in the Bible, Adam and Eve had an accident there.

This is the place from where one has a fall. Here the fall should not be considered religiously. Here it should be considered as a state of evolution of consciousness.

Now I am thinking perfectly well. I go on thinking but maybe after a few days something happens to my brain, retardation takes place, hormones go down or there are fewer hormones or more hormones or something like that. Now, this is called a fall in the structure of brain. We may not even use the word fall, you may call it devolution in the structure of brain. So the devolution can happen in spiritual consciousness also, as it happens in the brain. From Muladhara you can definitely fall down. From Muladhara we go sometimes down and sometimes go up. Saints and sages have been talking about this, that the consciousness travels down sometimes into animal levels, subterranean levels and sometimes it goes up. With the help of Kundalini Yoga there is no possibility for the consciousness to go down, because Tantra and Kundalini Yoga both make use of animal instincts also. They say finish them off and get along to your right path

Hari Om Tat Sat

Sadhana for Muladhara Chakra

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

Manduki Kriya

Please turn off the lights.

Those who can manage to sit for about fifteen minutes in Vajrasana should sit in Vajrasana.

In Vajrasana you will kindly keep your knees apart. Knees are separated a little but not too much. The fingers of both hands should be interlocked together and kept in the lap just below the navel.

The wrists resting on the thighs with interlocked fingers. Close your eyes for a moment and listen to me carefully. With your eyes closed concentrate mentally on the tip of your nose.

Concentrate on the tip of the nose with the eyes closed as if you are trying to see the tip of your nose with your eyes open.

Keep your mind constantly there.

Keep your mind placed on the nose tip at the same time slightly open your eyes.

Do not open your eyes fully, open them slightly but keep your eyes and the mind fixed on the nose tip.

Even though you may not be able to see your nose tip yet, you can feel the sensation on the bone but you have to feel the sensation at the tip.



Again close your eyes but continue the nose tip concentration.

Open eyes slightly but keep to the nose tip concentration and whenever you are tired you can close your eyes but keep the nose tip concentration.

When you are ready again open your eyes slightly and look at the nose tip.

When you are ready close your eyes again and continue

nose tip concentration.

Go on like this. (long several minutes pause)

Chanting Om together.

O O O M M M M

O O O M M M M

O O O M M M M

Hari Om Tat Sat

Open your eyes and relax yourself.

Turn on the light please.

Chakra Seminar: Swadhisthana Chakra Theory and Practice

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

A very important point to be noted is that though Muladhara occupies a very important place in the scheme of the chakras, it should be remembered that there is another chakra close by which is very important and greatly responsible for the awakening of the energy in Muladhara chakra. Its name is Swadhisthana.

Swadhisthana literally means one's own place, one's own residence. In fact it is said that previously the seat of kundalini was in Swadhisthana. But somehow there has been a fall and ultimately it came down to Muladhara. The original home of Shakti is Swadhisthana. But in fact Swadhisthana and Muladhara are not very far from each other. They are two closely interconnected chakras.

The location of Muladhara as you know is the perineum, and the location of Swadhisthana is at the root of the spinal cord or you may say that these two chakras are known as the sacral plexuses, both the sacral and coccygeal plexuses.

By the mere fact that the center Swadhisthana plays a very important part in the discovery of the unconscious principle in man shows what a great

influence this center has on the human brain. It may be understood that the center that is in Sahasrara or the center that is in the brain connected with Swadhisthana chakra is the center which controls all the phases of unconscious. Therefore, we try to analyze the state of consciousness when it is passing through the state of Swadhisthana. When awakening takes place and the Shakti is passing through Swadhisthana, a momentary state of unconsciousness comes to the individual.

This unconsciousness is a very powerful and potential condition of existence. As you already know, in the collective unconscious, in the *hiranya garbha*, the *samskaras* and the *karmas* are hidden in a seed state. We do not see the *karmas* at this moment of our gross existence. We do actions, mental and physical both, good and bad at the same time. You know there is of course a reaction on your consciousness. Your consciousness is registering all the actions that are being done by you, whether they are physical or mental. You know that yesterday you had a pleasant or a painful experience and that is a subconscious force or a subconscious process. But there are many actions which we have done, which we do not know at the moment. There are many forces of nature, there are many forces of karma which are connected with us which are in us, which are really acting in us, whether they are justified or not. We are completely unaware of those great forces.

As such this unconscious principle of Swadhisthana should not be considered as a very inactive process but rather as more active, more dynamic, and more powerful than the normal consciousness of a human being.

It is said that all the *karmas*, the past lives, the previous experiences, the greater dimension of human personality that is the unconscious, can be symbolized by the chakra which is Swadhisthana.

Now, if you recall what was said about Muladhara, it symbolizes the remnants, the traces of all the stages of consciousness which the human being, or which the *jiva*, the individual has passed through. In many previous incarnations in the bodies, or during the process of evolution in the past, the individual, not the man, the *jiva*, the soul and the self, has been experiencing different things, exhausting a number of instincts, expressing a lot of them. At the same time he has been carrying with him a lot of things. By the time the individual has evolved to the point of Muladhara he has lost a lot, he has gained a lot, and at the same time he has been retaining some things. That retention is the animal instinct. This animal in Tantra is known as *Pashu*. *Pashu* means animal. This animal is ego. This animal is the past karma. But the past karma of animal life does not live in man as a distinguished section, separate section or classified section. It lives in man as a whole.

Now I am a human being as far as the body is concerned. But there are many traces in me, of course in you also, which you have inherited from your previous stages of evolution. Of course, there are many things we have already lost. There are many things which have newly evolved in us such as the power of awareness for the fact that I know I am. This is peculiar to man. But at the same time, the way we move, act, think, eat, sleep, feel emotionally and so on is peculiarly animal. This is the influence of Muladhara on our whole personality.

Now, when you go to Swadhisthana again, it is the complete unconscious, it is not the expression. In Muladhara the karmas are in the manifested state, the animal karma, the karma of the previous incarnations, the previous stages of evolution are in us in the form of anger, greed, jealousy, passion, love, hatred, sleep, etc. We are working them out. We are manifesting them. But in as far as Swadhisthana is concerned there is no activity. It is a magazine of karma where everything has been locked and in the interior of the process nothing but a total dynamic unconscious is there. This stage is known as the stage of hiranya garbha.

In the Vedic scriptures, the Rig Veda, it is said *"In the beginning of creation there was hiranya garbha, then came all the living beings, all the beings that exist, and He was the protector of all."*

In Tantra there are two concepts. One is the concept of an animal the other is the concept of the master of animal.

Animal, as you know, concerns Muladhara. It concerns the whole manifestation of man today. The master is called *pati*, in Sanskrit. Who is the master of the animal? In Tantra it is said he is called *pashu pati*.

Anyone who has been to Nepal will well remember that the name of the deity in the temple of Katmandu is Pashu Pati Nath. It is one of the names of Lord Shiva. I did not say it is the name of Lord Shiva. It is one of the epithets of Lord Shiva, one of his expressions. Now, this Pashu Pati which controls all the animal instincts where is that? That is Swadhisthana chakra.

The Swadhisthana chakra which is total unconscious, which is also hiranya garbha, according to mythology, it is the Pashu Pati, because it has absolute control over Muladhara chakra. Or I would

say it has absolute control over the manifestation of the man during his first milestone of upward evolution. Muladhara is the first milestone on our upward evolution. As a human being today we are definitely in the first step of evolution. As animal we have completely gone out of our animal limitations. We are making a very quick departure or you may say we are out of the boundary of the animal dimension.

Therefore, Swadhisthana is considered a very powerful disturbance, as a very powerful hindrance or impediment in the sadhana. When the awakening of kundalini takes place, as mentioned in the previous chapters, there is again a spell when the kundalini returns back to dormancy. It is when the spiritual consciousness of man is trying to make headway upward then his karmas come in front of him. These karmas about which he does not know, these karmas which are beyond the range of his analysis, these karmas which have practically no form but which have a force are very significant in the psychology of yoga and Tantra.

There are certain karmas which are formless, which have lost the original form but which are in the form of force. To give a crude example, supposing there is a big water tank and you put in all kinds of paper, rags and many other things. When you put them in you put them in as individual objects, the paper, the cardboard box, the shirt, the sock and so on. But if you happen to empty that tank after five years and examine the bottom, you will not find the objects which you have put in. The matter has changed its form in the course of those 5 years. It has not been destroyed it has only changed its form. In the same way there are many karmas in human life which do not mean anything

to us. This is a very significant point. There are many karmas during the day which are not very significant, which we do, which we register but which do not have any influence on us.

If I have some quarrel or some bitterness with you, well it is a very strong registration. But if I happen to meet you on the way, look at you and just pass on, this is a very simple karma which actually does not have any significant influence on my life but it is also registered.

According to Tantra each and every perception, every experience, every association, every karma is recorded whether you are concerned or you are not it does not matter. As a swami I am not concerned with a butchers shop, or a shop where eggs are sold. I am also not concerned about bars but a particular range of consciousness is aware of everything that I experience when I travel around in a car for instance. And all those things which come within the range of my perception, within the range of my knowledge, within the range of my association, within the range of touch and so on, they are all registered automatically. They are not analyzed they are only registered, taken in and kept.

Those insignificant, un-analyzable, unimpressive karmas which have been registered automatically in our consciousness they form this total unconscious. Swadhisthana is made up of all the rubbish which you never wanted and which you never needed, which you never desired but which you got. Therefore, this chakra is supposed to be a great hindrance.

Hindrance only in the sense that it does not allow the consciousness to penetrate through and go up to Manipura, because those karmas which are lying embedded in your unconscious self are such that

you cannot even analyze them. That is why when the explosion takes place, when eruptions take place in Swadhisthana it is very difficult to analyze the behavior of the sadhak or the aspirant.

As far as I am concerned, the experiences with others have shown me a behavior that is so peculiar that it has no rhyme nor reason, no logic nor background. It is something like a man who is throwing away something of which he has no idea. If you have a lot of money in your pocket but if at the same time I have also put a few nuts in your pocket and you start to throw away the money as well as the nuts, you do not know that you are doing it. In the same way during the course of expression in life, when the Swadhisthana is coming to awakening, the behavior of the individual is illogical. This illogical behavior sometimes is attributed to his mental condition and people say "Oh! This man has gone crazy."

Now the sadhana of Swadhisthana is very peculiar, it is so peculiar that it is only concerned with the Vajroli Mudra, or the Vajroli systems. It is concerned only with, so to say, the sex complex which includes the gonads, testes; the ovaries or you may use the word genital-ovarian system.

The whole sadhana is concerned with the genital ovarian system. It is also a very important point that vajroli and sahajoli and amaroli are three kriyas of Hatha Yoga. But at the same time in Tantra also we have the same kriyas. But the way we practice these three kriyas are slightly different.

In Hatha Yoga the practice of vajroli is done through the help of a silver catheter. Similarly, with the practice of amaroli and sahajoli. Well you are not concerned with that at the moment. There three kriyas concern

both the females and males. Vajroli is for males and amaroli and sahajoli are for female bodies.

In Raja Yoga, the vajroli is done just by voluntarily controlling the nerves, the nadis and the system. In Hatha Yoga it is done with the help of a catheter and of course it is very powerful, no doubt, but it is too difficult for us to concern ourselves with at this moment but we are not going to talk about that kriya.

But about vajroli, the simplest known practices are the few asanas which include mulabandha and vajroli. You may be aware of the asana *shalabhasana*, you remember the locust pose?

Shalabhasana is done lying down on your stomach, raising both legs and if possible, the trunk also. Well this asana may have an influence on the liver, on the spinal slipped disk; it is all right we agree. But this is a very important asana, as far as, the control of mulabandha, vajroli mudra and Muladhara are concerned.

If the position of the excretory and the urinary system could be observed at the time of practicing shalabhasana you would find that they are at the height of contraction. If you practice shalabhasana, you are contracting and when you are releasing shalabhasana you are releasing the contraction.

There are other asanas, such as dhanurasana also which is very important in so far as the initial practice of vajroli is concerned. Why am I telling you all this? Because instead of going into the practice of vajroli directly, which is a very simple kriya, which is a very simple, unsophisticated movement, it is better that you make yourself more perfect by shalabhasana, dhanurasana and uddyanbandha. Uddyanabandha is contraction of the abdomen, the rectus abdomini.

These three and a few others will train the entire genital system, ovarian system, urinary system, reproductive system, the prostate glands, the urithyroids, and the particular nerve which controls both the testicles called the Vajra nadi. They are the two nerve channels of course physiological, which control the testicles and also the ovaries. They are called Vajra nadi. The name is sometimes translated as Bajra, and therefore the name of this kriya is Vajroli or Bajroli.

In this context I have made it very clear for you that before hand we must practice these asanas in order to make the contraction or control most perfect. Then we go to the practice of Vajroli.

Now, one important thing which I want to add is that the sadhana which is meant for awakening Swadhisthana or for awakening the unconscious is also the sadhana for the Bindu chakra. There are other sadhanas also for the Bindu Visargha which we shall be discussing later. The practice is the same. Vajroli is a practice for Swadhisthana. Vajroli is a practice for Bindu.

It is said in the books of Nada Yoga that by the practice of Vajroli you can reincarnate or you can manifest your sound body. I am sure I am making myself clear now. Just as you refer to the astral body or psychic body, we are differentiating these astral bodies also. The sound body is also the astral body. By practicing Vajroli mudra in deep meditation we are reincarnating or we are manifesting that dimension of our existence which is nothing but sound, *nada*.

Our personality, that is to say, my being or my existence is existing on the plane of sound in many directions, in many stages, it is not only one sound. I simultaneously exist in different sounds and those

sounds have different vibrations, as you know 250 per second, 350 per second, 400 per second, and so on. The emergence or the manifestation of the sound is the effect of Bindu. So do not forget that Vajroli mudra is also a sadhana for the Bindu Visargha.

Now coming to the traditional chakra symbology, first you find the crocodile is the vehicle. Of Muladhara, the elephant was the vehicle, the 7 sapta dhatu. Here we have the crocodile which is the subterranean movement of the karmas, which is also the symbol of the unconscious karmas, the formless, unanalyzed, store magazine of karmas. So you have two yantras. The first yantra is outside the circle with the petals not the colored one but inside, that is the yantra as I mentioned earlier, about the geometrical body. That is that dimension of your existence.

Inside you have a similar chakra, a circle and the petals which mean that the crocodile is the vehicle for carrying the whole pantheon of unconscious life.

The deva of this is Brahma. Brahma, according to the Hindu mythology is the creativity, and it is also the hiranya garbha. The word *hiranya* means golden and *garbha* means womb. *Hiranya garbha* literally means the golden womb. Now Brahma is the golden womb. It is like an egg, out of this egg the whole creation, the whole manifestation has emerged. It is said that in this body there is a golden egg but we will not discuss this at the moment.

Brahma, who is the creator, has his own Shakti. In mythological stories, funny as it may sound, Saraswati is the daughter of Brahma and at the same time she is also the wife of Brahma. Saraswati is the daughter and the wife of Brahma at the same time. Well we may not be able to understand this immoral relationship.

But you will agree with me when I will tell you that the creator who is Brahma, the cosmic creator and Saraswati is wisdom. Wisdom is born of mind you know it very well. Knowledge, Jnana, is born of the mind. It is very simple. What I understand I understand through my mind. So this understanding is born through my mind. So my mind is the father and understanding is the daughter. I mean it is a kind of relationship.

Understanding is born but at the same time the mind is acting with understanding, the knowledge. The mind is the creator of knowledge, this is point number one. The mind is acting with knowledge because it has knowledge within itself. So, Saraswati being the symbol of knowledge is born of the cosmic mind and at the same time it is working with the cosmic mind. The cosmic mind is working with Saraswati and cosmic mind is the creator of Saraswati. It is in this context that the symbolical relationship has been put. Actually he is not the father or the husband in the ordinary sense as we understand in our world. He is the creator of Saraswati but at the same time he is living and acting and manifesting with Saraswati. So Brahma, the creator, the cosmic mind is the deity of Swadhisthana chakra. Saraswati his counterpart, or the daughter and wife is the devi also known as Shakini.

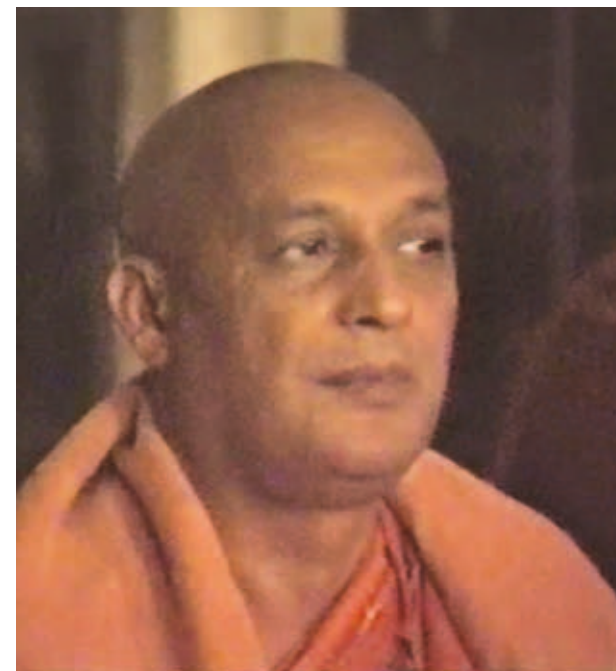
It may be of some interest to you that there are different feminine deities in the mythology. Those feminine deities are conceived in two ways. As respectable gods, Vishnu has Lakshmi, Brahma has Saraswati, Shiva has Parvati, or they are the counterparts of these goddesses.

These same powers are seen on a lower plane, what you might call in the public places. They are the other aspects of the manifestation of the same deity.

Saraswati can again be seen in the form of Shakini. This concerns vegetation. This concerns the vegetable kingdom. This Swadhisthana chakra is being guided by the vegetable world, by the vegetable kingdom or by the vegetable system and that is why it is said that at this particular point of the sadhana in Kundalini Yoga it is very important that the sadhakas become vegetarian and develop more of the vegetarian system in their body, since Shakini is the head of this chakra.

From Swadhisthana the Ida goes to the right and Pingala goes to the left, that is, in the opposite direction. From Muladhara Pingala was to the right. Ida was to the left. Now Ida is to the right and Pingala is to the left and they meet again in Manipura.

Hari Om Tat Sat



Sadhana for Swadhisthana Chakra

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

Vajroli Mudra

Please turn off the lights.

Please be seated in siddhasana or if siddhasana is not possible,

then press Muladhara with one of your heels.

And the upper heel must be placed in the centre at the lowest point of the abdominal viscera.

In this case, the heel is pressing the lowest point on the abdominal viscera.

This is the seat of Swadhisthana.

The upper heel should be at the center in line with the navel.

Both hands are on the knees, thumb and index finger together with the other three fingers separated from these two. And with palms facing upward.

Eyes closed

No movement.

When you practice siddhasana or siddhayoniasana then the upper heel is pressing a particular part of the abdominal viscera exactly in the center.

And you should try to feel that pressure.

It is at that pressure point that you have to concentrate. Practice khechhari, by withdrawing the tip of the tongue to the soft part of your palate.

You may practice khechhari as long as possible and release it from time to time.

Now when you are concentrating on that point which is being pressed by the upper heel,

You should physically contract it.

The contraction should start from that point of concentration,

but finally it has to cover a large area

including the genitals and the testes and ovaries inside.

You must keep the Muladhara area still; the perineum should be kept free from contraction.

It is very difficult to escape from contraction of Muladhara but if you are careful you can do it.

Contraction should be done slowly and you should also release the contraction very slowly.

You should start the contraction slowly from this point of concentration and then in the same way you should relax.

After one round of contraction and relaxation you can start the same thing again and this should be done a number of times.

Now go on yourselves.

ca. 3 minutes

Contraction and relaxation must be done slowly and controlled voluntarily.

Voluntary control of the organs will not come today but it should come in the course of time.

The practice of uddiyana, shalabhasana and

dhanurasana will indirectly help you to a voluntary control over these muscles.

Go on practicing with total awareness. *ca. 3 minutes*

Keep your eyes closed.

There is another way of practicing the same.

You place your palms on your knees so that you press them.

You do this by raising your shoulders a little, but the elbows should remain straight.

You are pressing your knees and your shoulders are raised a bit, with the neck bent slightly forward as it is in jalandharabandha. Now in this way you have to practice the same exercise of contraction and relaxation.

ca. 3 minutes

Then again come to the straight position as before and continue the same kriya.

Contraction and relaxation in an absolute mood of meditation, without moving the body.

We call it Vajroli . . .

Practice the Vajroli movement with greater awareness. It may not be possible for you to contract a lot unless you have voluntary control.

But bye and bye in a few days it will come. *ca. 2 minutes*

Relax the khechhari and then you will practice Om chanting.

O O O M M M M

O O O M M M M

O O O M M M M

Hari Om Tat Sat

Open your eyes . . .

Turn on the light

Chakra Seminar: Manipura Chakra Theory and Practice

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

The location of Manipura chakra is in the spinal cord behind the navel or the inner wall of the spinal column. It is a very important center as far as the awakening of the Shakti is concerned. Manipura is correctly pronounced Manipura. *Mani* means jewel and *pura* means city so *Manipura* means a city of jewels. In the Tibetan tradition this chakra is also known as Manipadma. *Mani*, jewel and *padma* means lotus the jeweled lotus.

According to many Tantric traditions in India as well as in Tibet actual awakening is supposed to take place from Manipura and above. There are Tantric traditions where there is no particular reference to Swadhisthana or Muladhara. And in some of the traditions the sadhana or the practice always starts from Manipura and Anahata and Ajna onwards. This is so because Muladhara and Swadhisthana are the two centers which belong to the higher ranges of animal life and they contain within themselves the traces of animal nature, whereas Manipura chakra is the beginning of the evolution of the higher man.

In Muladhara and Swadhisthana it is the animal man, from Manipura and onwards he is the higher man with great force and therefore the tattva of Manipura is fire.

Agni, the element of fire is the tattva. The fire element is a very important element in the awakening and realization and in many other processes that are intrinsically connected with our life. The bija mantra which is Ram is the bija mantra of the yantra that is the triangle. Both Muladhara and Manipura have an inverted triangle within the circle.

The Manipura is also the centre of the sun and is also known as solar plexus. It has both aspects, positive as well as negative. The negative aspect is that the sun consumes the nectar. It is said in the yoga scripture that the moon is secreting the ambrosia, the nectar. The sun consumes that nectar and as a result of that old age, decay and emaciation comes to the human being.

The moon, that is to say, a particular part of a particular gland on the upper body is secreting a fluid which is amrit, nectar or ambrosia. The sun which is in Manipura consumes the whole of the nectar. It burns the whole of the nectar. This constitutes the negative aspect of Manipura.

But at the same time the positive aspect is that once the consciousness is established in Manipura, there is practically no danger of downfall, or there is no danger of devolution of consciousness. The human consciousness or the consciousness which has evolved through the animal incarnations is liable to recede back from Muladhara and also from Swadhisthana. But once it is established in the Manipura centre then there is no possibility of the recession. It is confirmed awakening as we call it.



Then comes another important point and this is of immense interest to you all. In our body there are five fold pranas. The pranas are classified into five fold divisions, known as:

1. prana
2. apana
3. vyana
4. udana
5. samana.

In brief these are the names. These are the different vital activities or different forces of one's vitality in the body. They are different activities of the forces of prana. Now in the navel centre there is the junction. I am not talking about Manipura, I am talking about the contacting centre for Manipura. In the navel, not in Manipura, there is a junction where the prana and apana meet each other.

That which is inhaled is prana and that which is exhaled and expelled is apana. Now when these two breaths move they move in the same direction. Prana moves in a downward direction and apanas

also moves in a downward direction. When the direction changes, the direction of the prana is towards the navel and the direction of the apana which is normally downward should be reversed by control, by particular kriyas which we will learn more about later.

Then the apana has a different motion and it goes up and they join. They join in the navel centre. When these two join in the navel centre it is known as a union of prana and apana. This union of prana and apana is a kind of awakening which is attributed to the kundalini in Manipura.

It is said that in Muladhara when kundalini wakes up it is like the hissing snake and it makes its way up. It is a kind of awakening in a spiral movement. But in Manipura the awakening takes place like a blast. When prana and apana meet it is like two great forces colliding with each other. Because prana and apana are both powerful they meet at the junction in the navel then they create a kind of force which is conducted to Manipura centre in the back, because the nerve channels are there. It is that force that awakens the Manipura center. Therefore in the practices for Manipura you have got uddiyanabandha which you have already heard about and also nauli.

Uddiyana means the contraction of the abdomini and control of the entire navel muscles, intestines, rectus, everything.

Nauli means control of the rectos abdomini and churning it completely. Of course you may say that this is good for the intestines. This is a physical aspect of the practice, but the yogic aspect of uddiyanabandha and nauli kriyas is to create a union between the prana and

the apana in the navel and when that union takes place then there is a generation of Shakti.

Then Shakti is conducted back to the Manipura center and that is how the Manipura chakra is awakened. In the Buddhist tradition again this particular centre is also known as Hara. In Shaiva Siddhanta, *Hara* means leaving, dispelling. When the Shakti leaves Manipura and goes up it is in the state of leaving, it is in a process of leaving. So this centre has three names. One is Manipura, the second is Manipadma and the third is known as Hara. They denote the same thing.

In the Tantric and Buddhist traditions the Manipura chakra is supposed to be a very important center in the awakening of all the beautiful psychic powers. Up to Swadhisthana the psychic powers that awaken are naturally accompanied by some kind of maleficent awareness. Well, I would not call it black magic but somehow the clairvoyance or telepathy or clairaudience or the associated psychic awareness is not completely free from the maleficent mental attributes because the personal awareness of the sadhaka is not clean. Well, absolute cleanliness is not expected from everybody but what happens is that while expressing the psychic powers he tries to manifest and express himself. But when it comes to Manipura the sadhak has a kind of spiritual awareness that is called the divine awareness, devic awareness and he has understanding about the different lokas.

In front of him there exists another land which he has never seen before. When I am on this earth I see the space and the moon. When I am on the moon, maybe I see some other planets because I will be nearer to them. In the same way, Muladhara

is the gross plane of existence, Swadhisthana is the intermediate plane of existence and Manipura, according to the mythology is heavenly plane of existence. You may even call it paradise or heaven. It is the third plane.

Evolution takes place in seven planes called:

- Bhu—earth
- Bhuvaha—intermediate space
- Svaha—heaven
- Mahaha
- Janaha
- Tapaha
- Satyam—the truth.

We are now discussing Manipura which corresponds to the third plane, Svaha and which is the end of this mortal plane, or which is the boundary of this mortal concept.

First we are in Muladhara and we are able to see the plane of Swadhisthana. When we go to Swadhisthana we are able to see the plane of Manipura. And when we are in Manipura then we can see the plane of Anahata. But from Muladhara we cannot see Anahata and therefore the limitations of the perception of the sadhak in Muladhara or Swadhisthana is responsible for the misuse or the wrong use of those siddhis with maleficent views.

Since the sadhak who has reached the third stage of higher consciousness is able to visualize before him that infinite state of consciousness which is not gross, which is not empirical, full of beauty, truth and auspiciousness, all his views are completely changed. There is no prejudice; there is no personal bias and there are no complexes. But if my evolution is in Muladhara and Swadhisthana I will have my own

problems, emotional or otherwise and I am going to see everything with the same eyes. But if I transcend Muladhara and Swadhisthana and go into Manipura and happen to see the bliss, all the good ideas, all the noble views and all the greater possibilities, then naturally whatever I will think, that will be influenced by my vision. The siddhis that come to the sadhak after having established himself in Manipura are really benevolent and compassionate siddhis. This must be remembered.

Therefore the name of this chakra is the city of jewels. These jewels are the most precious faculties of human consciousness. They are shining, they are not dark like coal, they are not dirty, they are not maleficent but they are magnificent. Therefore, it is known as Manipura, the city of jewels.

The sadhana that is done to awaken Manipura has different methods which I will explain.

1. According to Hatha Yoga, the practice of *trataka* is for the awakening of Manipura chakra, because the Manipura chakra is directly connected with the eyes. The Manipura chakra is also directly connected with the feet. The *karmendriya* are the feet, that is, the organ of action. The *jnanendriya*, the organ of knowledge are the eyes. So the practice of *trataka* has a direct influence on the awakening of Manipura. This is one sadhana.
2. The second sadhana is called *uddiyanabandha*. First you must practise a few kriyas such as *agnisar* for a long time. Then you must change your diet somewhat. Manipura should not be awakened with faulty diet so that no wrong effects and reactions take place. I must make it

very clear, not that I am against any particular diet you know it very well. The diet has to become very pure and certain courses in fasting also should be undertaken because Manipura is actually the fire centre.

When *agnisar* kriya has been practised then the next thing that you have to perfect is known as *siddhasana* which is also important for Swadhisthana and Muladhara.

You should sit in *siddhasana* and practice *rechak*, that is, exhalation. Exhale completely and withdraw the navel forgetting everything about the abdomen; only the navel. You must concentrate only on the navel inside. Naturally, in *uddiyanabandha*, the abdomen will also be contracted. Then you practice *jalandharabandha*. Now, retain that *uddiyanabandha* for 5 seconds and gradually increase the time up to three minutes. I can tell you that it is not so easy, nor should you try to attempt to practise many *uddiyanabandhas* every day. If you practice 5 rounds on the first day and then gradually go to three minutes in about 2 or 3 months time you will be quite all right. Unless of course you have been practising it for a very long time already, then you can start from the first day.

The practice of *uddiyanabandha* as you know needs absolutely clean, unloaded intestines. Especially the smaller intestine must be kept clean because it involves a particular center in the small intestine. It should be kept completely free from all kinds of heavy and toxic matter.

3. Following the *uddiyanabandhas* comes *nauli*. *Nauli* kriya is also a kriya of Hatha Yoga. In *nauli* the rectus abdomini is centralized first in the center then it is churned. First it is controlled on

the right side, then on the left. Then the churning is to be done or a crescent moon movement inside, not outside, of the whole rectus on the internal wall. When that is finished then it has to be moved on the external and internal walls and then you make a complete circuit.

These three Kriyas, *trataka*, *uddiyanabandha* and *nauli* make the sadhana complete. In addition to that there is also one more sadhana which is a little more difficult.

They say while practising *mulabandha* you should try to feel that the force is going from Muladhara up to the navel and the ingoing breath is moving downward to the navel. These twofold processes have to coincide. It is something which you will have to practise to understand whereas you are trying to pull the force from Muladhara to Manipura, simultaneously, you are also breathing from the throat down to Manipura. These forces of prana moving downward to Manipura and *apana* moving upward to Manipura are joined there and then you concentrate, and then leave it. Then once again, breathing in move down to Manipura and *apana* up from Muladhara to Manipura and then leave it. It is a very interesting exercise which you will like very much. Of course you should not overdo it in the beginning, take time for the awakening of *kundalini*.

Now we are going to practise some of the sadhanas which we have learned already.

First, *Ashwini Mudra*

Second, *Vajroli Mudra*

Third, Union of Prana and Apana

Fourth, *Manduki Kriya* or *Nasikagra Dhristi*

Hari Om Tat Sat

Sadhana for Manipura Chakra

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

Union of Prana and Apana

Please turn off the lights.

Ashwini Mudra

It is important to remember that we are going to practice a sadhana

meant to activate the Ajna chakra and kindly remember it is not to awaken Ajna chakra.

I say this because it is felt by some people that this sadhana is for the awakening of Ajna chakra.

No! We want to discover the Ajna chakra.

In order to discover the Ajna chakra we are practicing this sadhana first.

The discovery of Ajna chakra is very important in the path of spiritual practice.

To do this we have already been practicing contraction and relaxation of Muladhara.

Press the perineum with one of your heels.

Muladhara is the same center which your heel is pressing.

Since some of us are beginners we should not do this with great force.

We should not try to withdraw the perineum too much.

We are only humble beginners, this is how we should take it up.

Close your eyes please and practice chin mudra.

I use the word chin mudra for the position of your hands.

Your spinal cord should be straight, eyes should remain closed.

And please make sure you do not touch another person.

Concentration on Muladhara first by repeating Muladhara in your mind a few times.

Muladhara Muladhara.

The place that is being pressed by the heel.

Then contract Muladhara . . .

Now practice this contraction and relaxation of Muladhara in a very nice rhythm,

Keeping your mind on the process and try to keep an account of the number of rounds you have done.

Go on doing this yourself for some time. *ca. 3 minute*

Vajroli Mudra

Keep your eyes closed and start the second practice in which you contract the lower portion of the abdominal viscera,

that is the root of the urinary system,

Gradually extending the contraction to the testes

and gradually withdraw the entire genitor-urinary complex.

Contraction and releasing . *ca. 3 minutes*

With greater awareness go on practicing Vajroli .

Contraction of genitor-urinary complex.

Union of Prana and Apana

Now for the new practice, keep yourself steady in the same asana.

From Muladhara and from your throat² two forces travel to the navel.

From the throat to the navel one force;

From Muladhara to the navel another force.

And they have to move simultaneously in the direction of the navel.

When you feel that you have reached the navel you have to do *kumbhak*,

retention of breath and mentally try to be aware of the central point of force there.

Then release the breath and continue this practice in your own rhythm.

The awareness of the two forces traveling in the central direction of the navel must be simultaneous and then at that time mulabandha gradually takes place.

Go on. *ca. 3 minutes*

Hold the breath for as long as you can, centralizing the force in the navel.

Now remain seated quietly for a moment without opening your eyes.

Manduki Kriya

Change your asana to Vajrasana.

Now the fourth kriya begins.

In this form of Vajrasana, the knees are kept slightly apart.

Both hands with interlocked fingers are placed on the lap, not on the knees.

or on the thighs but on the lap so that both hands join each other.

Close your eyes and become quiet again.

With closed eyes concentrate on the tip of the nose.

Nasikagra

Nose tip

Eyes closed.

Just the awareness of the nose tip.

While you are aware of the nose tip you should slightly open your eyes

but maintain the awareness of the nose tip.

Close your eyes and still continue awareness of the nose tip.

ca. 3 minutes

Chant Om

O O O M M M M

O O O M M M M

O O O M M M M

Hari Om Tat Sat

Now open your eyes and relax yourself.

Turn on the light.

Footnote: 2. This practice can also be practiced, feeling the movement of the prana from the nose tip.

Chakra Seminar: Anahata Chakra Theory and Practice

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

The Anahata chakra in Kundalini Yoga is a center of importance because the awakening of kundalini in Manipura is constant no doubt, but it has to be in Anahata for a pretty long time to fully awaken it. It is known as the heart center but you should not misunderstand Anahata chakra to be the biological heart, though the biological heart is connected or included in the complex of Anahata chakra.

Anahata is its name because the throbs, the vibrations or the rhythm in this Anahata center is unbroken. The word *Anahata* therefore means non-stop and unbeaten. It is also said in many scriptures that there is a kind of sound there, which is of course not a physical one, which continues without any break and which has no beginning and no end.

According to the yogis belonging to a particular sect called Nath, the seat or the centre of Anahata is the place of manifestation of a particular sound, a particular nada, which is known as Anahata nada, a sound which is non-empirical, which is transcendental.

The great Guru Goraknath, who is supposed to be the second of the 84 Siddhas, according to the tradition

of Siddhas, was also the founder of the new school of Hatha Yoga. He has written in a number of places that when you concentrate on the breath, continuously, 21,600 times in 24 hours, then the centre of the heart produces a sound. The sound and electric flashes are similar, the luster and the effulgence is constant. This Anahata chakra is considered to be the seat of Shiva and Shakti both.

The inverted triangle is the symbol of creativity, of Shakti. The upright triangle is Shiva. The interleaving of the two triangles symbolizes the union of Shiva and Shakti, consciousness and matter, these two great forces.

This is also a very delicate centre because it is connected with that particular part of the brain which is responsible for all kinds of fine arts such as painting, music and so on. It is also said that in the present age, at this moment, we, the people of this world, are passing through a phase of Anahata chakra. It also means that in most people Anahata chakra has started functioning.

There is a difference between awakening and functioning. There are certain centres which are dormant, which do not function at all. There are other centres which function, i.e., there is a slight activity in those chakras. Then there are the chakras which are completely awakened. It means that they are completely active. This chakra, Anahata, is not completely active in man, it is not completely awake in a person, but it is functioning. Muladhara is almost active.

The bija mantra for this centre is Yam and the different mantras which you find on the petals start with Kam and go up to Tham. They belong to three dimensions of sound, first the dimension of Kam, second the dimension of Cham and third to the dimension of Tam.

The practice for Anahata chakra is very easy. It is said by many saints that you should imagine that there is a hexagram in the heart centre, and in the centre of the hexagram there is a lake on which there is a beautiful blue lotus. Many groups and people prefer this symbol as logo, e.g., Pondicherry Aurobindo Ashram or the Ramakrishna Mission. That is the symbol of the heart, the blue lotus on a big lake.

In Tantric scriptures it is said that this particular centre is the wishfulfiller. It is to be recalled here that there are two ways of thinking in human life. One is the independent way of thinking and the other is the dependent way of thinking. Whatever a man thinks that shall come to him. This is one approach to life. Whatever is given to man that he shall achieve, that is the second approach. Up to Manipura chakra the following truth holds:

*“Whatever is given to you,
whatever has been ordained to you,
that you shall enjoy and that you shall have.”*

But once the Shakti comes to Anahata, then the ordainment is:

“What you wish that shall come to you.”

So the jiva, the individual souls, who are treading their paths towards the higher stages of consciousness, remain completely dependent on what is already enjoined for them, their fate or destiny, what is called Prarabdha Karma. In Muladhara you are completely dependent, even the awakening does not make much difference, nor in Swadhisthana or Manipura either. It is true that when the consciousness has ascended in and through Manipura you do become master of some of your situations in life, but still you are bound to the karmas which you have done in your previous cycles, in

your previous incarnations. You cannot completely get out of the karmas. In Anahata this is not so. So Anahata is the fourth chakra.

The three chakras, Muladhara, Swadhisthana and Manipura belong to this empirical universe, to the universe which belongs to the mind, body and senses. But Anahata chakra belongs to the fourth category and it is almost beyond the empirical dimensions, it is called non-earthly. Muladhara, Swadhisthana and Manipura are earthly but Manipura is at the boundary. Therefore, people who believe in fate are stuck at the Muladhara and Swadhisthana. Those people who believe in fate, but at the same time know that they can get out of it, even though they do not know how to get out of it, belong to Manipura.

Then there are those people, who know that of course fate is real but still one can escape it. It is like throwing something into the sky. What happens depends upon the speed of the object and also upon gravity. If you want to throw that object out of the gravity of earth, you have to create sufficient speed, as you know very well. That is how the rockets are put into space; sufficient speed has to be gained.

In the same way, in Anahata, the mind, the consciousness, the individual approach to life gains speed. It is only in Anahata that you become a yogi, not before Anahata. In Muladhara, Swadhisthana and Manipura you are a yoga practitioner and not a yogi. But once your consciousness has gone into the field of Anahata, to the dimension of Anahata, then you become a yogi.

According to Tantric and Yogic texts there are three categories:

1. An Aruruksha—one wishing to tread the path of yoga,

2. A Yoga Rurha—one who is practising yoga,
3. A Yogi—one who has practised and is established in the yogic consciousness.

In Anahata one becomes a yogi because the practitioner solely depends upon the powers of his own consciousness rather than depending on anything that is external and of the nature of fate. It is true that yogis believe that there is a thing called destiny, a thing called the chain of action and reaction. Every karma has to be paid for, and you cannot get out of it. This is known in yoga and Tantra as Prarabdha Karma.

Prarabdha is the fructification of the totality of the karmas from life in previous incarnations. In Tantra we believe not only from previous incarnations, but also from the karmas of our parents and previous generations.

It is said that we are also responsible for the karmas of the society in which we live. Now there are three things:

1. Karmas of previous incarnations that come with your individual consciousness,
2. Karmas of your parents and generations, which have come with the mind, and
3. Karmas belonging to the society in which you are living.

So you have to enjoy and suffer the karmas of all these three sources. There is no doubt about it. It is a complete logical science.

But when you come to Anahata, figuratively speaking, your consciousness is accelerated to that speed which is the speed of feeling, the speed of willing. Therefore, at the root of the Anahata chakra there is a tree. In Tantra that green tree is known as Kalpa Vriksha, a wishing tree. Everyone has wishes, to be prosperous, peaceful, nice and so on and so forth.

Everybody has that tree in himself, however it does not fructify because of his reason.

In Anahata this tree becomes manifest and whatever you wish will come true. There is a very fine story about this Anahata chakra if you will bear to keep it in mind.

Once a traveler was sitting underneath a tree. He was very tired and thought that he would like to have a little drink. He thought of a small brook nearby and immediately there was water.

After drinking some water he thought that he would like a little bit of food and that appeared also.

Then he felt very tired and he thought that he would like to rest and there was a nice bed in which he slept. The foolish man did not know why all this was happening.

In the evening, when he awoke, the sun had set and night had already fallen. He got up and thought: "Oh it is terribly dark, maybe the tigers will come and destroy me and so it happened."

Now this is what we call wish fulfillment. It is said that in Anahata center this capacity of wish fulfillment comes true.

There is also another beautiful story I can narrate. It is of course a symbol and should not be taken literally.

Once, Lord Shiva became very pleased with a Rakshasa, a rakshasa is a monster, because the rakshasa was a very good worshiper of Lord Shiva, who did so much penance, austerities and a lot of japa on the name Om Namah Shivaya.

Lord Shiva was pleased and asked the rakshasa what was his wish. The rakshasa asked to be granted the power to destroy to ashes, anyone over whom he held his hand. Lord Shiva, as is his nature said "O. k. I will give you that power."

Then the rakshasa told Lord Shiva he would test to see if he had been given that power by trying them out on Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva ran away and he said, "Hey this is very dangerous." The rakshasa ran after him.

Lord Shiva ran to Brahma then ultimately he went to Vishnu and told him, "Lord! I am in trouble." Vishnu asked him what was troubling him. Lord Shiva told Vishnu about the boon he had granted the rakshasa and that he wanted to try it out of him. Vishnu said, "O. k. I will try to get you out of it." so he changed his form.

Lord Vishnu became a beautiful girl, a damsel or what you call a heavenly dame. As he started to dance the rakshasa came running and asked if he knew where Shiva had gone.

The dame said, "Do not worry about Lord Shiva. I am here at the moment, let us dance first. You dance with me and then you go." The rakshasa agreed to this but after a few steps he stopped and said he didn't know dancing. The Dame told him it didn't matter, it was very easy, just to follow her and do as she did. So she started to dance and the rakshasa followed step by step. Finally Lord Vishnu put his hand on his head and the rakshasa did the same, turning himself to ashes.

Of course this story has a double meaning, the second of which applies to man.

The chakra of Anahata is of vital importance and as I told you the Shakti wakes up from Muladhara, goes up to Manipura and recedes. This is the first circuit. Anahata is the second circuit.

When you go to Anahata not knowing what powers of the mind you have, negative and pessimistic attitudes, dark approaches to life, apprehensions and many other things, it will happen that you immediately fall back.

If you return from Manipura to Muladhara there is a possibility that you make a second start. But once you fall back from Anahata, there is hardly any possibility of return.

So the person who has gained that wish fulfillment power has to be very alert. He has to be as alert as a deer, an antelope, which is so sensitive to each and every sound. It is not the symbol of restlessness but it is the symbol of alertness. It so happens in many people that whatever they think just happens, they are very happy and just say, "Oh I wished and it happened."

At that moment we have to analyze, scrutinize, the whole of our attitude to ourselves, to others, to our own fulfillment and to the fulfillment of others. If there are qualities such as doubt of others, and thoughts such as, "maybe that man is my enemy," or "my son is sick maybe he will die." "My friend has gone away, maybe he will meet with an accident." "Now, I am traveling by plane, what if something happens to the plane and it crashes." "I have money in my pocket, oh! Somebody may steal it." All these things happen to us every time and we have a little bit of palpitations of the heart and we think "maybe I am developing angina pectoris." or a little bit of pain here and "oh! It may be appendicitis or gall bladder pain." If you have a little bit of headache, maybe it is blood pressure or cerebral thrombosis.

All sorts of thoughts concerning the body, concerning the children, concerning the family, concerning the monetary position, concerning the society, or concerning the social or political status, all kinds of thoughts come to us. They come to us and they also start happening suddenly. Because we are underneath that tree in Anahata and we are also having the boon

of Lord Shiva. We are placing our own destructive hand over our own head.

Therefore, it is said that when the Anahata chakra blooms, when it is awakened then the yogi must have a very good *Sangha*, he must have a very good association. He should not associate with the people who depend on fate. He must associate with those people who depend upon faith.

No! It cannot happen! How can it happen? No! Even if my son is suffering from the worst disease and the medical science has declared he is going to die. No! It cannot happen. That is called the life in faith as against the life of fate. Because science has declared that he is going to die. The astrologers and palmists have declared he is going to die. But faith says No! This is how the yogi has to work with the possibility of his own will.

The people in Anahata chakra, if they are actually faithful they become very prosperous in material life also. They become prosperous in material life concerning the monetary position, concerning their job and business and work, concerning their wife and husband and children, progeny, tribe. On all sides they grow and grow and grow, and if they are always keeping the nice association of faithful people, that is, people who believe in the dynamism of will, then they will always grow. But if they keep the company of the people who depend on fate, well, $3 + 3 = 6$, we know it. But $3 + 3$ can also be seven. These type people have to be in association with people who believe in the dynamism of will.

Coming to the next point, now, the will power is not an outcome of suggestion. Supposing you are ill, you say a hundred times, "I am well, I am well, I am well, I am well, I am well..." this is called auto suggestion, this

is not will. Will power is always dependent on a certain capacity of intuition, and intuition is always dependent of your right approach and right decision.

This Anahata chakra is very significant in the life of a man who is living in the world. The great Yogi Aurobindo always said, “How can you be sorry, how can you suffer, when the two greatest forces are awakened in you? The mother, that is, Shakti and the father, that is Shiva, when both are here how can you suffer?”

A particular hymn from Yajur Veda says, “The whole lotus is inverted on the blue waters and underneath the blue lotus, within the water, the fire is burning and this is the extent of creation, This is the whole cosmos.” In the heart is the whole cosmos. It is in the shape of an egg and lastly in the Veda is written. “This is Brahman, seat of Brahman. This is the seat of Vishnu. This is the seat of Indra, that is, the cosmic mind. This is the seat of the entire consciousness.” That is why many saints and sages prefer this particular centre to be the seat of Paramatman, that is, the cosmic consciousness. Well, I may agree or not that is a different matter, I am only telling you what they feel.

Coming to the awakening of Anahata chakra. The first thing that you have to do is to qualify yourself with correct decisions and correct ways of thinking. Before that the awakening of Anahata chakra should not take place. If you have noticed that in your life whatever you wished, or a few thing that you have wished, or something that you have wished, came to fructification, though the entire atmosphere was not for it, the preparation was not correct, then you must be very careful and create a new attitude to life full of optimism, full of hopes and never negative. A yogi in Anahata chakra should never be negative to any situation in life.

Someone may be a murderer. Well you are not concerned that he is a murderer, to you he is a good man. Whether he is a gambler, it does not matter, for you he is a good man. He may be a debauch, well you are not concerned with his debauchery, for you he is a good man. Everyone is a good man for you. Everything is a good thing for you. Every event is a good event for you. The future is always bright! This must be the attitude. Nothing is wrong. The future is always bright. Whether it is poverty, suffering, disease, conflict, divorce, emotional crisis, it does not matter, it is a part of good. It is a part of brightness and I like it. This is a peculiar sort of attitude the yogi has to develop.

Then the kundalini shines forth and goes to the fifth chakra. And that chakra which we shall discuss next is the chakra of Immortality. Now you have understood how very significant this centre is.

In the book *Saundarya Lahari* it is very nicely written that this tree is known as the Chintamani. Chinta means worrying, thinking, brooding, a mental process. *Chinta* in Sanskrit means a process of reflection and thinking. Mental activity is called Chinta. *Mani* means jewel. Chintamani means the jewel of thinking. This tree is known as the Chintamani in Tantra. In mythology, in yoga it is known as Kalpa vriksha, and it is said, there is a garden that is called the garden of the *devas*, of the divine people. It is a very big garden and in the centre of the garden is Vapi. *Vapi* means a small lake, and in the centre of this divine lake is the tree and the tree is called Chintamani. It is not at all important for you to be underneath that tree if you have the vision of the tree. If you can realize your proximity to that garden, then whatever you think that comes true.

And so, what should a yogi think? This is the last question, because you can not decide. You cannot have a big list and say I am going to do this and this and this. Oh! There are millions of things. Only one thing a yogi has to think: the whole world is in me. That is all. The whole world is in me, that is to say I am in everyone. There are two ways of thinking. Either I am in everyone! Or everybody is in me! For that then the mantra which you must have is the mantra of Hanuman the monkey god. And actually Hanuman is the symbol of Anahata chakra and his tail is the symbol of Muladhara chakra which was burnt in Lanka. This is a long story which I will not narrate here.

You see Hanuman's character is very peculiar, a faithful one, full of loyalty, full of possibility and the only mantra that he had on his lips was Ram. What is this Ram? Ram is the bija mantra of Manipura. Ram, Ram! You may say Ram or your may say Rama. It is Agni, it is fire. So the consciousness in Anahata must remain in contact with Manipura all the time.

I always say, that the Mantra of the heart centre is Om Shanti! Om Shanti! Om Shanti! That is to say, the yogi or the yoga aspirant must have always peace of mind within. On three spheres, the bodily, the mental and the spiritual spheres there must be complete peace with oneself, with the people outside and with everybody all around. Though the world is full of conflicts, contradictions and what you call deep differences and animosities, still a yogi has to feel shanti.

The sadhana that you have to do for Anahata chakra is ajapa japa which is very simple.

I will translate one of the verses from a yogi. *You must remember your mantra in such a way that your consciousness and your breath sings So ham, So ham, So*

ham, So ham, 21,600 times the japa should take place spontaneously. Then a sound will be produced in the region of the heart which is an unbroken sound which is called Anahada. Then the spinal cord will be illumined like a neon light or as if the sun has risen within the spinal cord. At that time the mantra, your mantra So ham will vibrate everywhere in the body. You will not only feel it in the spinal cord but you will feel that every part of the body is vibrating So ham, So ham, So ham. This is a stanza of one of the greatest yogis, Goraknath.

In the Islamic religion there was a great Sufi saint. His name was Akhbar. He was a *mussulman, a Mohammedan*. He was also a great Vedantin. He used to repeat the mantra Analhak which means, 'me the Reality'. *Anal* means me, *hak* means Reality. So the Muslims, the priests became very much angry with this man. They said, he is a heathen or an idolater. He talks as if he thinks that he is God. How can this fool be God? So they called him before the court and asked; "Do you say Analhak?" He answered, "of course I say Analhak." They said, "How is it that you say Analhak? You are a mortal being. The body, the flesh, the bone, the marrow, the urine, everything dirty, how can you say that you are God?" He said, "No! No! Me the Reality."

They said this man must be punished. So what they did was they cut his skin at one point and started peeling the skin off of his body. Of course it was very painful. They started peeling the body and the people who were in charge of peeling his body felt that not only the mouth but from the whole body they heard the sound, kat, kat, kat, kat, Analhak, Analhak, Analhak. The mouth was closed because they had bandaged it shut but the vibrations of the mind, the vibrations of the consciousness, became so powerful in him that they

became audible to the people. Well, this is a part of the story from the literature from the great Sufi saints.

So this also happens in the practice of ajapa japa. The practice is very simple. You do not have to sit in an asana. You do not have to pose for a posture. You do not have to keep you spinal cord erect and straight. You do not have to close your eyes. You do not have to see the time of day, morning or evening. You do not have to see whether the stomach is loaded or empty. You do not have to see whether you follow a rule or a regulation, nothing of the sort. You must try only one thing, to be aware that you are breathing; an awareness of breath, natural, spontaneous breath.

It may be deep breath, it may be a short breath, it may be disturbed breath, it may be a quick breath, it may be a slow breath. That is not your concern. You do not correct it but let it be as it is. Sometimes it may be very deep. Sometimes it may be very short. You are not going to correct it, you are only going to be a witness to the entire process of breathing. But if you breathe a hundred times, you must also witness it a hundred times. If you breathe a hundred times and you are aware of the breath 99 times, you have missed one. You have been breathing right from the time of your birth, you know but you have never been aware of the fact.

The breath has been to us what we call unconscious breathing, and the practice of ajapa japa, which I am going to teach you now is called conscious breathing. This is one point.

Second, the ingoing breath is So and the outgoing breath is Ham, So Ham. You do not have to create, you do not have to imagine but you have to see if it is there. Sometimes this So Ham becomes Ham So automatically. You do not have to do anything please! So Ham, then it

becomes Ham So. For sometime you feel Ham So, Ham So Ham So again it changes So ham So ham So ham. You are not doing anything. You are only a witness to whatever is happening, Ham with the exhaling breath and So with the inhaling breath. So is ascending Ham is descending. So Ham, So Ham, then the circuit changes, Ham So, Ham So, Ham So, the circuit keeps on changing, there is a revision of consciousness. It does not matter. As I said the breath is normal. The awareness of the mantra is spontaneous. If you do not hear So Ham, if you hear something else, maybe Om, Om it is all right. If you hear some other mantra, Tara, Tara, Tara, or Kleem, Kleem, Kleem, it is all right.

Today you may hear So Ham, tomorrow you may hear some other word and everyday you may have new words automatically coming to you. You do not have to worry about it. But you must be aware of the breath movement constantly which happens 15 per minute, 900 per hour, 21,600 times in 24 hours.

If you practise it for a few days, or for a few weeks, later on it becomes an unconscious act. It becomes an unconscious and spontaneous act. This is the sadhana for the awakening of Anahata chakra.

But side by side with this practice, you can do another practice. You must feel that you are breathing into a big bag. Now, your diaphragm is a bag and beginning at the throat is the breathing passage. When you breathe in the breath goes in and it pervades all the great space. This space is known in yoga as Hridaya akasha. Akasha means space Hridaya means heart. It is the space within the heart where the purity resides. So this space physically is only so much, but astrally it is very big. It is absolutely formless, totally dark in the beginning. Later on everything comes by itself.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Sadhana for Anahata Chakra

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

Basic Ajapa Japa

Please turn off the lights.

Sit in any asana and close your eyes for sometime.
It is not important that you remain in one posture.
If the posture is uncomfortable, you can change it by all means.
There is not control of the body.
If you feel like scratching you can do it in between.
Concentrate on the throat.
Be aware of only one point please.
Be aware of your breath in the throat.
This is point one.
Then add the awareness of the ingoing breath from the throat downwards.
You have nothing to do with outgoing breath.
Your particular attention should be on the ingoing breath in the throat.
Ingoing breath in the throat is going into the deeper realms within the network of the diaphragm.
Now, you should also become aware of the akasha,

the space within the network of the diaphragm.
With the ingoing breath you feel the filling up.
Only awareness of the process of filling up.
This process of filling up is only a basis for the awareness of this vast space.
The act of breathing and feeling the breath is only the basis for feeling the heart space.
Once you become aware of the space of the heart then you feel the heart space directly which is contracting and expanding on the rhythm of the breath.
Breath is only the basis; the process of filling up is only the basis.
Once you are able to comprehend the whole space, then you are aware of the space alone.
Feel the contraction and expansion of this vast space which is taking place on the rhythm of the breath.
The breath is spontaneous and natural not the special and long breath.
It has to become spontaneous breath, voluntary breath.
In this practice the awareness of the space in the heart is important.
If the awareness of the space of the heart is constant by feeling the expansion and contraction after some time many other things will be visualized there.
You do not have to visualize anything, the vision comes by itself.
You do not have to create a vision.
You do not have to imagine, the vision comes by itself.
You have only to wait for it.

The vision is of a lake and a blue lotus.
You do not have to imagine, it will come to you when the awareness of the heart space is constant.
If you are able to feel the space of the heart contracting and expanding it is alright.
If it is not possible, then you have to feel the breath which is filling up the space, which is the first stage.
The second stage is the direct feeling of the space and its expansion and contraction on the rhythm of the breath.
The third stage, the awareness of the blue lotus and the lake will come by itself.
Keep yourself ready for that.
Then the other practice, ajapa japa is to feel your own natural breath and associated with the inhalation the mantra So and with the exhalation the mantra Ham.
Awareness of the spontaneous breath coupled with the idea of So Ham.
You must be at ease with this practice.
You can feel the breath in the nostrils or you can feel the breath between the navel and the throat, or in the throat itself.
Or you can feel the breath and So Ham in the space of the heart.
You can feel all places at once or one by one.
It matters little. Long pause ca. 6 minutes
O O O M M M M
O O O M M M M
O O O M M M M
Hari Om Tat Sat Relax yourself.
Turn on the light.



Chakra Seminar: Vishuddhi Chakra Theory and Practice

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

In the Tantric scriptures it is written that the moon secretes the fluid ambrosia and it is consumed by the sun in Manipura. It is within this context we have to discuss and understand a little about the Vishuddhi chakra or traditionally the Vishuddhakya chakra, deriving from the word *shuddhi*, to purify. Therefore this chakra is a centre of purification but it is very difficult to understand why this plexus or this chakra is known as Vishuddhi. What kind of purification is affected in this centre? We can understand Ajna and we can also understand Manipura where samskaras are purified but in Vishuddhi this process of purification is something which you have to understand right from the beginning.

At the top of the head there is a place that is known as Bindu where a kind of fluid is manufactured which is known as ambrosia and that fluid is brought down to a particular gland in the nasal orifice or the upper part of the epiglottis; the passage through which you are trying to push your tongue during khechari mudra. Those glands are situated behind the chakra which is known as Lalana or Talumula. Those glands are the

reservoirs, they are the magazines actually, not the manufacturers. When the gland is stimulated then the fluid comes down and it is consumed by the body.

Now this fluid which is manufactured at the top in the Bindu is known as nectar but actually it is not nectar. It is a mixed fluid which can act as poison and can also act as nectar. When it is produced in Bindu and is stored in Lalana or above the center of Lalana it is neither poison nor nectar. When it is secreted by any mudras, such as khechari etc. , then it goes to Vishuddhi and it is the Vishuddhi chakra which is the purifier or which is the centre of the refinery. It is said that this secretion is only purified in the area of the throat and if Vishuddhi is functioning properly then the whole process of purification or refinement takes place. It is in this particular sense that Vishuddhi chakra is supposed to be very important and that is why it is said that it confers immortality.

If Vishuddhi chakra is not stimulated, is not awakened, then the process of refinement does not take place. In that case, what is the net result? It is the poison.

You may have heard the legend about Lord Shiva and the drinking of the poison. Out of the 14 things that came out during the churning of the ocean, one was the poison and another was the nectar, nectar and poison side by side. The devas wanted nectar but nobody wanted poison. The monsters, the rakshasas also wanted nectar, but they were not given the nectar because that would have given those vicious evil things immortality. Only the devas got the nectar but nobody was prepared to drink the poison. So they approached Lord Shiva and said, "Nobody is prepared to take the poison. Now what exactly are we going to do with

it? Where should we throw it because, wherever we throw it, it will burn?" Lord Shiva just took it and placed it in his throat. From that time one of his names is Nilakantha the blue throat. And that is the Vishuddhi centre where even the poison can be digested.

It is possible that not only the internal poisons but also the external poisons can be completely neutralized but also the whole thing is dependent on the process of Vishuddhi chakra. Vishuddhi chakra is connected directly with the centre in the brain which is known as Bindu.

The sadhana, the practice for the awakening of Vishuddhi chakra is very simple. It is said that by the practice of jalandharabandha you can awaken the Vishuddhi chakra.

At the same time there are many postures in yoga and by doing them the Vishuddhi chakra can be awakened. But the most important exercises for the awakening of Vishuddhi is the Vipareeta Karani Mudra. It is not exactly sirshasana nor sarvangasana because these two are also known as Vipareeta Karani, the topsy turvy poses. But it is particularly the Vipareeta Karani Mudra which is good for the awakening of Vishuddhi chakra.

In addition to this there is one more kriya, it will be difficult for me to tell you all about it at the moment, known as Amritpan, that is, the drinking of the nectar. This is the name of the exercise and it is a very important and very powerful one, which concerns pranayama along with certain mudras, mental, psychic, as well as, physiological.

Vishuddhi chakra seems to be a very insignificant center, because everybody is always talking about Anahata, Muladhara or Ajna or Sahasrara. Only seldom is Vishuddhi talked about.

In the musical scale of Kundalini Yoga there are only two chakras which are supposed to be the basic chakras.

It will not be possible for me to go into detail here about what is meant by the musical scale in Kundalini Yoga but in the musical scale of the chakras or rather in the music of the chakras it is only the Muladhara and the Vishuddhi which are known as the basic chakras, because Muladhara is the first and Vishuddhi is the fifth. And in these two chakras there is practically no change. They are called the basic chakras or the basic sounds. So after Muladhara it is the Vishuddhi which comes next in importance.

Another point to remember is Vishuddhi is responsible for picking up the thoughts in other's minds. With Vishuddhi there is a particular nadi or nerve channel which is known in yoga as Kurma Nadi the nerve of tortoise, *kurma* means tortoise; the nerve in the form of a tortoise which is connected there. By awakening that particular nadi it is also possible that the practitioner can completely overcome the necessity of food and drink. There are people who have actually demonstrated this and they have been from a very common class. This is known as Kurma Nadi and again in the same center connected with Vishuddhi there is another center which is responsible for receiving the thought vibrations from others. It is something like a wireless or transistor set which receives almost all the vibrations.

People do feel something somewhere else; some people feel it in Manipura or elsewhere. But the actual center where the transmissions, the thought waves are received is the Vishuddhi. From Vishuddhi they are conducted to the respective centers in the

brain and then only are they conducted back to human knowledge.

In addition to this, the awakening of Vishuddhi chakra has a very important part to play in the rejuvenation of the human body. Whether it is Hatha Yoga or Kundalini Yoga or Tantra Yoga it does not matter. When the Vishuddhi center is active then the rejuvenation takes place. By rejuvenation I mean the regeneration of the tissues in the body in contra-distinction to degeneration. There is a moment in life or when you suffer from diseases like leukemia or similar such diseases where the rate of degeneration of cells is too great in comparison to the regeneration, then death, decay, old age and disease come to man. It is definitely said that the awakening of Vishuddhi chakra is responsible for the maintenance of health, youth and longevity. So the Vipareeta Karani Mudra and the Amritpan are supposed to be the most important practices of this chakra.

Vishuddhi chakra is also a basic chakra like Muladhara because it contains the basic sounds, a, e, i, o, u, your vowels. There are sixteen vowels in Sanskrit and sixteen petals in Vishuddhi. The vowels are the basis of the entire sound formula. All the primal sounds started from Vishuddhi. A is a primal sound. O is a primal sound etc. These vowel sounds are directly connected with the brain.

Before concluding about Vishuddhi chakra and closing these reflections, except for a few reflections on Bindu and Sahasrara, I would like to offer my own personal opinion based on my own experience regarding the chakras.

You may have got one impression which you are carrying around with you since the time you came in touch with Kundalini Yoga.

The current belief, based on writings by the ancient sages, that kundalini wakes from the bottom and passes through all the chakras is not a truth. It never happens and these chakras are not interconnected. Each chakra is directly connected with the brain. Just as eight switches are directly connected with eight electric equipments, not with each other. Of course we have to use the old expressions because people are used to hearing these things so many times that when you say something new people are baffled.

But the truth is this that any Shakti or any power does not reside and go on moving from chakra to chakra in such a way. From Muladhara awakening straight away goes to Sahasrara, a particular center and from Swadhisthana straight away to Sahasrara; so also for Manipura, Anahata and Vishuddhi and Ajna. From these centres the awakening, the shock of awakening or the wave of awakening straight-away goes to the top of the Sahasrara chakra.

Though traditionally the seat of kundalini is in Muladhara, I think this view has to be corrected. The seat of kundalini is in Sahasrara. And if at all you have to believe that the seat of kundalini is in Muladhara then it is everywhere. But I can tell you, of course I have my own view, so I must tell you that the seat of power is in Sahasrara and all the chakras are only manipulating centers such as switches. It is written in most books that these chakras are the reservoirs of power, it is not true. They are physiological centres and most of their construction depends on these chakras more or less. If the spinal cord is cut we can see the lotuses, the nadis and everything of course color is not there, so far as the experiences and other symbols go I do not disagree.

However, in Sahasrara there are compartments of sound, there are compartments of symbols, there are compartments of forms, music, colors, telepathy, clairvoyance, clairsaudience and well, many other things which you must have heard about, possible or impossible. But it is true, that in the brain beyond what you have already achieved by this time, beyond this layer of the brain, there are layers after layers, there are planes after planes, there are blocks after blocks, rather we should say areas after areas which have definite centres and which are lying dormant, they are all sleeping. Sleeping in a sense that they are dormant and they have to be awakened. The structure of the brain, when you cut it completely, definitely looks like the lotus leaf, but if you look at it carefully and completely it looks like a coil, as if a python is coiled.

If you have an opportunity to observe a bi-section you will see that like a python the brain is lying down and breathing. So it is like a snake, there is no doubt about it. It is also kunda. Here is also a very wrong interpretation because in Sanskrit *kunda* means a kind of coil. They say that the kundalini means that which is coiled. But actually it is not that. Traditionally that is the transmission but we have to correct it if we think that they were not right.

The word kundalini comes from the word *kunda* which means a deeper place; that which resides in a deep place, kunda. You may have heard of the place kunda for the fire ceremony, the kunda where the dead body is burnt. It is a deeper place. If you dig a ditch or a pit it is called kunda. *Kunda* literally means pit and that pit into this brain is at the depression of the head.

So we are trying to understand the concept of kundalini in a very practical sense because modern psychology is going to fail in the eyes of science. The future science is going to challenge and explode all the myths of psychology. It will not stand because all these things people talk about, the complexes, inhibitions and guilt; they are nothing but depth-physiological conditions. All this is concerned with these chakras. I do not say that this body is the only thing but there are deeper physiological reactions which are almost psychic. They are not other than body. No! They are offspring of the body, they are outcomes of the body, it is true; but they are called depth, physiological behaviours, depth-physiological vibrations, momentum, give them any name you like. It is in this sense that we have to correct this view before it is taken up by the scientists.

Coming to one more important point, these nerve centres, about which we are talking, these chakras are not situated inside the spinal cord. They are situated on the interior walls of the spinal column like junctions. Hundreds of nadis or fibrous communications go from these nerve bunches and they control the different physiological portions. It is something like the electric pole; you put it in the centre somewhere and connect ten wires to different rooms, to different places, to different houses. This is how it is with each and every center and these nadis and these chakras are carriers of prana in both directions.

There is a forward motion and there is a backward motion, the communication and the reaction. If you are contacting, if you are awakening Manipura chakra something is happening. What happens? The whole event that takes place immediately goes up. It can be

a physiological reaction, a nervous reaction or it can be a depth-physiological reaction. By awakening, please remember, we mean to awaken the psychic phase of that particular gland, or the psychic phase of that particular nervous system.

Whether it is Muladhara or Swadhisthana or Manipura, just an awakening of the physiological portion is nothing. You may give one injection, or you can take a drug or you can take a hammer and beat one of the centers but that is not enough. But by awakening we mean that behind the matter which you call Vishuddhi, etc., inherent in the matter there is some psychic force, there is some immaterial existence, and that immaterial existence has to be disintegrated, that has to be fissioned out and that is the process of awakening.

It is not awakening of kundalini but awakening of the chakras and by this kundalini is awakened. Therefore, in the fifteenth chapter of the Gita, it is said that the roots of the tree are at the top, the branches are below and this is the imperishable tree. The thoughts, distractions, etc., are the leaves of this tree. He who knows this tree knows the truth. Now, here are the roots, (the brain) and here is the tree (spinal cord). It is a topsy-turvy tree. In the next sloka it is said that one has to climb this tree from the top to the bottom if you want to cut the roots. From the top you have to climb and then you go to the roots. So this is the tree which should be conceived as a topsy-turvy tree.

This is what we think everybody is trying to do, to move from Muladhara to Sahasrara. Another person is moving from Swadhisthana to Sahasrara. The third time you might be climbing back, I do not know if I should

say climbing back or getting down, from Manipura to Sahasrara, or Anahata to Sahasrara, then Vishuddhi to Sahasrara, then Ajna to Sahasrara but not Bindu. That is, you are climbing to the root every time and the root is at the top, the brain.

If you concentrate on any particular centre of the brain on a trial and error basis, maybe you can also succeed after a shorter or longer time. But it is not sure that the system which is going to be awakened is going to be the positive centre, it can be negative also, and that happens with many people. It is also said that one must practise pranayama and a few Hatha Yoga practices. Why? You have read in your books that pranayama give oxygen, etc. I am not discussing this point at the moment. By the practise of pranayama on each center in the brain there is a veil which is burnt. Pranayama is a very strong kriya. It is a very strong exercise for burning.

What precisely are you doing? Supposing you have a few golden rings which have fallen into a pit and it is not possible for you to get into that pit because some people have thrown in lots of paper. So what will you do? You put a little kerosene oil and light the whole thing, wait for sometime until the paper is burnt. Your rings are there, easily recovered. Now this process of burning the dross of the mind, I hope I am clear, you can even say mental blocks, which are purely a psychic affair is done by pranayama.

It is written in Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*:

52. *Tatah kshiyate prakasavaranam.*

What happens after the pranayama takes place? When pranayama takes place then the veil, the dross or the block which is hiding the light or the greater understanding is completely removed. So practise

of Hatha Yoga and practice of pranayama improve the condition of the brain so that the awakening can take place.

Now you must understand that whenever you are working on any chakra you are actually trying to put on the light. The switch is in one place and the light is in another place. I always tell people: Where is your switch? The switch is out of order and without going through the chakras it is not possible for anyone to awaken the higher and the greater and the suprasensuous and non-physical centres.

By a freak of nature it sometimes happens that people have these capacities developed at birth because of their karma. It also happens sometimes if someone falls down or is struck somewhere, by chance he develops some sort of faculty and starts talking all sorts of nice things. But of course it does not happen with each and everyone and one should not try this.

There are others who feel that by taking drugs, the kundalini will awaken. (Maybe if you are taking drugs please do not mind, you see I am not an anti-druggist, I am not against it, but I must tell you the facts concerning the kundalini. If you want tranquillity then I say you can take drugs if you like.) With drugs it is impossible, the kundalini will sleep.

In the awakening of kundalini the brain, which at the moment is vibrating at a particular rate starts to vibrate ten times more. If the EEG of a person whose kundalini has awakened would be taken it should show the oscillations ten to twenty times greater than normal. It should show tremendous oscillations because every faculty of the brain is active. There is no dormancy. Therefore, the people who have a little

awakening are not dull people but are very active people, whereas the use of drugs completely dulls or paralyzes the *jnanindriyas* and the *karmendriyas*, the sensory cortex and the motor cortex. As such, the sensation of awakening which you produce in Muladhara or elsewhere cannot be circulated successfully and satisfactorily to those particular centres because there is a cut in-between, they are completely damaged.

It is something like this, if a wire between the switch and the lamp is cut and you put on the switch to the main plug, the fuse and everything works but the light will not burn. So there is a complete detachment between the main centre and the nerve centre. It should be understood that LSD, or any other drug for that matter, does create a sort of deeper psychological hallucination or experience, called a depth-physiological experience, but it should not be considered to be the awakening of kundalini because the awakening of kundalini is a kind of psycho-physiological event in depth. It is neither a psychological nor a purely physiological event, it is a mixture. You can say it is a peculiar event which concerns the body, the matter, but it is an immaterial event, material and immaterial both together.

Here briefly is my experience of Kundalini Yoga. There will be a lot of differences in my experience and the traditional expositions.

Now concerning the awakening, I can assure you that you should take up only Ajna first. You can take to Ajna, or to Muladhara or Anahata and also another way is to take all of them which I will explain.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Sadhana for Vishuddhi Chakra

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

Chakraawarohan

Turn off the lights please.

For Ajna center

Be seated in siddhasana or siddhayoniasana if possible. Otherwise at least one heel should be pressing the perineum.

Both hands in chinmudra.

Close the eyes and become steady, calm and motionless.

Without worrying about Ajna or anything you start practicing Ashwini mudra.

It is to be practiced not very fast nor very slow but at a medium speed

In a few days one should be able to feel the center of Ajna oneself.

When that happens you can start direct concentration on Ajna.

Until then go on with Ashwini mudra. *ca. 4 minutes*

Next the practice for Muladhara.

Sit in Vajrasana with the knees slightly apart.

Fingers interlocked together and kept on the lap, just below the navel.

First with eyes closed there should be concentration on the nose tip.

Keep the mind concentrated on the nose tip and at the same time slightly open your eyes.

Go on with the practice of Manduki Kriya. *3 minutes*

The practice for Swadhisthana.

Concentration is Vajroli mudra. *3 minutes*

For Manipura

From Muladhara to Manipura and from the throat to Manipura

Breathing and awareness process with retention there for sometime.

From Muladhara the force is drawn up, from the throat the force is drawn down,

the two are synchronized.

Concentration of energy is in the navel. *4 minutes*

For Anahata

It is in the space of the heart.

First concentrate on the throat then on the ingoing

breath that pervades the whole atmosphere inside.

Let the vision come by itself.

Do not bring the vision, but wait for it. *4 minutes*

Now you have to concentrate on each chakra.

I will recite the names and you will feel as if you are touching them with a small flower or with your thumb.

That is the only thing which you have to feel.

Muladhara,

Swadhisthana

Manipura

Anahata

Vishuddhi

Ajna

Vishuddhi

Anahata

Manipura

Swadhisthana

Muladhara

Go on yourself this way.

O O O O O O M M M M

O O O O O O M M M M

O O O O O O M M M M

Hari Om Tat Sat

Relax yourself.

Turn on the light.

(4 times guided)

3 minutes

Chakra Seminar: Bindu Visargha Theory and Practice

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

We have studied the chakras, which are of importance from Muladhara to Ajna, but in addition to these major psychic centres we have also the minor psychic centers which belong to a definite range. For instance, in a particular area there is Manipura or any other chakra and within that area there are other centers of awakening which are situated not only in the spinal column but also in different organs of the body. These organs of the body, maybe the kidneys, spleen, pancreas, and certain portions of the intestines, rectus abdomini, anus, and such other centres are related to a particular center of awakening.

But remember Muladhara is a center of awakening, is supposed to be the main junction, from which the nerves, that is, the psychic channels of energy and consciousness, flow to different parts of the body and control the different organs. Those organs which are connected with a particular center of awakening do contain some of the minor chakras and sometimes it happens that there is some awakening in those remote centres. Their awakening is conducted through the minor centre to the main centre of awakening, and that

is conducted to the Sahasrara where the actual and real awakening of Shakti, of energy, takes place.

In this respect, Bindu Visargha is also a very remote centre which is connected with Vishuddhi. Both centres, Vishuddhi and Bindu are interconnected centres just as Manipura and the digestive system or Swadhisthana and Muladhara the sacral-coccygeal centres, or Anahata and the respiratory and cardiac system are interconnected. Similarly, Vishuddhi and Bindu Visargha are interconnected.

The word *Bindu* means drop. But the name of the centre is not Bindu, but *Bindu Visargha* which literally means falling of the drop. According to the tradition and according to some of the physiological findings, in the higher centres on the top of the brain inside there is a small depression, there is a very small pit and that pit contains certain secretions you may even see in the physical body. There is not very much, not even one quarter of a spoon, at the most two or three drops. Within that quantity of two or three drops of secretion, there is a small elevation in the middle, like an island in the middle of a lake. This is supposed to be the centre of Bindu Visargha in the physiological structure.

It is this point from where in the brain, cranial nerves shoot forth and this particular centre also feeds the optic system, that is, the sight, or the light to the eyes. If there is anything wrong in Bindu Visargha there are many complaints concerning eye diseases such as glaucoma that occur.

So this Bindu Visargha is the seat of nectar and Bindu means the drop of nectar. In many Tantric texts it is written that Bindu, the moon, produces a very intoxicating secretion. It is ambrosial, it is an

immortalizing fluid, immortality giving fluid, and not only that it is the fluid which is the life of yogis. Yogis live on that fluid and if that fluid starts secreting in the body then you do not need anything, not even food.

You have heard of course and it is true that many people hibernate themselves under the earth. This has been done many times under strict observation. It has been seen that for as long as 40 days people can hibernated themselves successfully. Not all cases are genuine but about those that are genuine I can tell you exactly what they do.

They practise pranayama and perfect kumbhak. Then they practise khechhari. Not the type of khechhari which we have learned in the sadhana. There is a different khechhari and it is perfected in two years time by cutting the root of the tongue, by elongating it and inserting it into the epiglottis. Like a cork it is put there. By that practice the drops fall and they get mixed up in the whole system. They produce oxygen, they produce nutrition and at the same time they stop all possible processes of metabolism. Because it has been seen





that in 40 days of hibernation that man's beard did not grow. It was exactly as before when it had been shaven by the barber. So this particular secretion is able to control all possible processes of metabolism, produces nutrition and the required quantity of oxygen also. Therefore, the person who hibernates is able to live without breathing and it is possible to live for a while without breathing.

This drop is called Bindu and the seat of origination is the top of the head. It is at exactly the same place where the Aryans and the Brahmins in the olden days used to keep a tuft of hair. Now of course they do not follow this custom anymore because they wear their hair according to the western fashion. But there was a time when they did it. Even now some have it in India, they keep a very small piece of hair in order to show that they are Brahmins. But that was not the purpose. The original purpose has been completely forgotten.

It was located exactly on the top of Bindu and the name of it was tuft of hair or bunch of hair. In Sanskrit they used to call it *Shikha* which means the flame of fire.

At the time of sandhya, a particular kind of religious practice, much akin to yoga or Tantric practices the bachelors right from the Vedic period used to do this in India, and of course even now they do it. They used to hold this tuft, tighten it as hard as possible and tie it.

Of course I have also undergone that ceremony myself, though later due to western influences I stopped it. But I remember now when my teacher taught me that particular thing he taught me how to make it tight and tense and at the time when I used to practise sandhya and the mantra I used to feel a kind of tightness there. But now I feel that if I had that at least then I could feel the Bindu because that was the contacting centre.

This Bindu is connected with Vishuddhi through a particular network of nerves which flow through the interior position of the nasal orifice passing through Lalana. Lalana is a centre which is a very minor centre and it is connected with your khechari mudra, with the folding of the tongue. This Lalana chakra is responsible for the secretion of the fluid from the second centre. The nectar is manufactured in Bindu and it is stored in the second centre which is inside the nasal orifice and is excited by the khechari mudra and where this nectar is stored, that particular centre is called Lalana.

So Bindu, Lalana and Vishuddhi these three centers are interconnected. Lalana is not a center of awakening. It is a center which is helping during the secretion of the fluid. Bindu is also not a center of awakening. It is only Vishuddhi which is a center of awakening. When awakening takes place in Vishuddhi awakening takes place in Bindu and also Lalana chakras.

In the scriptures, the symbol of Bindu chakra is the crescent moon and moonlit night. Crescent moon

and moonlit night is the vision or the symbol of the Bindu Visargha.

You also must know that all the centers which I have already explained have a psychic symbol which is very different from the traditional one which you have already heard about from me.

Ajna chakra for instance, instead of having the symbols Ham and Ksham, it has a meditative symbol that is a kind of experience:

“drowsiness”

When you take ganja or hashish or any kind of drug like that you feel a kind of drowsiness, introversion. You are not able to keep yourself in touch with the external experience. When awakening takes place in Ajna there is that experience of drowsiness.

When awakening takes place in **Vishuddhi** you always experience:

“the feeling that some kind of cold drops are dripping.”

You actually feel the dripping of the drop which is the sign of awakening of Vishuddhi chakra.

Awakening of **Anahata** brings you particular symbol, a particular experience:

“Complete dark night and a small lamp is burning.”

An experience of a very tiny lamp flickering in absolute darkness, that is the vision of Anahata chakra.

Manipura awakening brings the experience:

“A big bright yellow lotus.”

A big bright yellow lotus is the symbol of the awakening of Manipura chakra.

Swadhisthana experience is:

“sleepiness or unconsciousness”

When the experience of unconscious comes it is the symbol of awakening of Swadhisthana.

In the same way in **Muladhara** the experience is:

“An inverted red triangle and a small serpent.”

Bindu Visargha experience:

“moonlit night and crescent moon”

No deva, no devi belongs to this Bindu Visargha because it is a part of Vishuddhi chakra. The practice of activating Bindu Visargha concerns vajroli mudra and a particular pranayama known as moorchha pranayama.

At the same time you must remember this particular center which we are discussing, is also the centre of nada. In Nada Yoga also you are supposed to practise concentration on Bindu.

Even as by practising ashwini mudra you awaken the existence of Ajna chakra, by practicing vajroli mudra you awaken the existence of Bindu. It is not only vajroli but also the moorchha pranayama which should be practised side by side.

In Bindu therefore in addition to nectar there is another important thing associated there which is known as nada. If you close your ears anytime and practise a kind of mudra which is known as shakti chalini or yoni mudra, you will find that in the centre of Bindu there is a sound which goes on continuously.

If you can discover that sound you can discover the point. If you do not discover that sound then you practise vajroli mudra and moorchha pranayama. By the practise of these two you will be able to awaken the existence of that particular center by discovering the nada, by discovering the sound. There is not one particular sound; there are many sounds in Bindu. Though it does not occur in the list of major chakras, yet Bindu has a very important place.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Sadhana for Bindu Visargha

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

Ajapa Japa

We will do some practice so sit in any comfortable asana with your hands any place you like.

Of course your eyes are closed in order to avoid distractions.

Become aware of your natural breath.

This practice is the type of ajapa japa that was indicated before.

Become aware of your natural breath and even if the mind wanders it does not matter.

But remember, you try to get yourself back to the center of breath every time.

Constantly you should have this thought. 2 minutes

With the breath you become aware of the So Ham sound.

You can feel the breath anywhere either in the throat, the nose,

or between the navel and the throat.

Wherever you feel it, it does not matter.

If after sometime the mantra changes from So Ham to something else it does not matter.

But you must be aware that you are breathing and that the mantra is going on.

It is not the changing of the mantra or anything else but the awareness of what is happening that is important.

4 minutes

Again and again try to remain more aware of the breath and the mantra So Ham or any mantra that comes during the practice. 4 minutes

Remain more aware of the breath and the mantra.

Feel closeness with the breath and the mantra.

Now the same breathing process should be done between Vishuddhi and Bindu.

That is to say, in one straight line up and down.

3 minutes

O O O M M M M

O O O M M M M

O O O M M M M

Hari Om Tat Sat

Relax yourself.



ENGLISCH IST „OFFIZIELLE“ JOGASPRACHE

Die verschiedensten Nationalitäten haben sich zur Diskussion und zu gemeinsamen Übungen zusammengefunden. Sprachgrenzen gibt es keine, denn sowohl der französische Swami als auch sein Kollege aus Deutschland beherrschen die Muttersprache des bärtigen Engländers, der ihnen vorführt, wie man besonders wirkungsvoll seine Beine verknoten kann.

Chakra Seminar: Sahasrara Chakra Theory and Practice

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

Sahasrara chakra which is at the topmost is not actually a chakra. It is said that Sahasrara chakra is the abode of purusha or Shiva or consciousness. Symbolically it is known as a chakra of 1000 or more petals. But we try to understand this in a different way. The whole of the brain is the area, which is Sahasrara chakra. But the main centre is the gland in the brain which is known as pituitary body. The gland is the center that is the chakra. Otherwise the brain is the whole area which is Sahasrara. The lotus leaves which are supposed to be the symbols of Sahasrara chakra, they cover the entire region of Sahasrara. Each and every chakra is directly connected with Sahasrara. You remember that I told you the other day, one is chakra, and the other is kshetra. By chakra I mean the center or the plexus. By area, I mean the great area which it controls. Sahasrara chakra is the pituitary body and Sahasrara area is the whole of the brain, and each and every chakra is directly connected with the brain or the Sahasrara area.

It is in this Sahasrara chakra that all the sounds, all the devas, all the qualities, and all the faculties are lying dormant. In order to open the thousands of petals

of this great lotus the awakening of the relevant chakra or different chakras has already been taught to you. The meditation that is done on Sahasrara is very simple. It does not take a lot of time and is one of the easiest meditations. But remember that meditation itself on Sahasrara does not give you the desired result. You will try today and find that it is very nice and very soothing and easy also. The awakening of Sahasrara depends on the awakening of the other chakras. If all the chakras are awakened then the whole brain, or the whole Sahasrara chakra is awake. If only one particular chakra is awake and the others are not then only one particular area of Sahasrara will be awake and its faculty can be seen manifesting in our life. By certain practices such as shirshasana, sarvangasana, and vipareeta karani, you can influence to a very great extent the brain and Sahasrara chakra. There are also the practices of pranayama which do help in the awakening of the Shakti or in the awakening of the pituitary body. It is also said in some of the books that siddhasana plays a very important part in the awakening of Sahasrara.

Now we are coming to a close concerning the studies about the chakras. We have come to realize one important point in this, that the secret is at the top, but the key lies with each and every chakra and that the reservoir of energy is at the top in Sahasrara. We do not say that now we experience this Sahasrara chakra. It is the final aim, and when the consciousness resides in Sahasrara it is something like samadhi which is known as Laya samadhi. We call it Laya samadhi or Laya Yoga samadhi in which the dissolution of the normal consciousness takes place and the yogi remains in a higher state of bliss and higher state of communion with his own self. Today we shall try to practice all the meditations which we have already learned.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Samstag/Sonntag, 27./28. März 1971



Photos: „Die Presse“/Faust

MEDITATION UNTER DEM BILD DES LEHRERS?

In Meditation unter dem Bild des großen Meisters Swami Satyananda scheint diese junge indische Yogalehrerin zu verharren. Doch der Lotussitz — für Ungerübte eine äußerst schmerzhafteste Angelegenheit — ist die „Normalstellung“, die sogar entspannend wirken soll.

Inder propagiert die „Friedenspille“

Großmeister des Yoga gibt seinen Wiener Anhängern Nachhilfestunden

Eigenbericht der „Presse“ von Marie-Theres Hemberger

WIEN. Als „Friedenspille“ bezeichnet der in einen faltenreichen Umhang gekleidete Inder, der mit untergeschlagenen Beinen vor einem Heizkörper einer Mietwohnung in der Komödiengasse in Wien-Leopoldstadt auf dem Boden sitzt, seine Lehre: Swami Satayananda Saraswati — „einer der berühmtesten Jogalehrer der Welt“ —, der gegenwärtig einen einwöchigen Schulungskurs in Wien abhält, ist davon überzeugt, daß die altindische Wissenschaft eine Entspannung im kollektiven Bewußtsein des Orients und Okzidents sowie Ruhe und Frieden in der Gesellschaft schaffen würde, wenn sich nur genügend Menschen zur Ausübung des Jogas bequemten.

Der Swami, der schon zum drittenmal in Wien weilt, hat sein Quartier diesmal in dem erst einige Monate bestehenden Wiener Jogazentrum aufgeschlagen. Dieses Zentrum wird von Dr. Peter Lauer, einem Österreicher, der seit 16 Jahren Anhänger der angeblich aus dem vierten Jahrtausend vor Christi Geburt stammenden Wissenschaft ist, und seiner amerikanischen Frau, ebenfalls einer begeisterten Jogiade-

tin, geleitet. Momentan geht es in ihrer Wohnung in der Komödiengasse, wo auch das Jogazentrum untergebracht ist, eher turbulent zu: da „turnen“ orangegekleidete bärtige Männer in verschlungenen Positionen auf ebenfalls orangefarbenen Wolldecken oder Matratzen — nahezu die einzigen Einrichtungsgegenstände der Wohnung —, und die in Strumpfhosen und Pullover gekleidete Janie Lauer empfängt ihre Besucher im Lotussitz am Boden hockend. Daß die aus Frankreich, England, Dänemark und Deutschland zum Seminar des berühmten indischen Lehrer herbeigeeilten Jogis — auch Damen befinden sich darunter — sämtlich in Orange erscheinen, hat seinen Grund darin, daß diese Farbe in Indien als zugleich beruhigend und dynamisch, also der Lehre des Jogas angepaßt, gilt.

Auch der Umhang des 48jährigen Swami ist in einem tiefen Orange gehalten, der gut zu der bronzefarbenen Haut des kleinen zierlichen Lehrers paßt. Aus Indien hat er ein eigenartiges Musikinstrument mitgebracht, das im Joga eine große Rolle spielt: denn durch Musik und das gemeinsame Singen von geistigen und Jogaliedern — „Kirtan“ — sollen die Entspannung und das Ent-

stehen des Gemeinschaftsgefühls gefördert werden. Kirtan ist aber auch eine Methode zur „Entwicklung geistigen Bewußtseins“, dem Ziel der Lehre. Mit seinen Schülern, die ihn mit großer Ehrfurcht behandeln, spricht der „Meister“ in einem geläufigen, wenn auch nicht akzentfreien Englisch und beweist im Gespräch einen feinsinnigen Humor, etwa wenn er das Verschwinden des Jogas, das seiner Ansicht nach früher in der ganzen Welt geübt wurde, als „geschichtlichen Unfall“ bezeichnet.

Der 34jährige Leiter des Wiener Zentrums, dessen Gesicht von einem üppigen Vollbart geziert wird, ist „hauptamtlich“ Doktor der Mathematik und bei einer Computerfirma angestellt. Sein eher nüchterner Beruf hindert ihn aber nicht daran, davon überzeugt zu sein, daß Joga heute „die wichtigste Sache auf der Welt“ ist. Wie sein Lehrer, betrachtet er Joga nicht als Philosophie oder Religion, sondern als Wissenschaft zur Wiedererweckung des von anerzogenen Verhaltensweisen, Komplexen und falschen Problemen „verbildeten“ Bewußtseins des modernen Menschen.

Es könne von Angehörigen jeder sozialen Schicht ausgeübt werden und ver helfe dem Individuum zu

Selbsterkenntnis und Selbstverwirklichung. Zu den Schülern Lauers und seiner Frau zählen Nonnen und Priester ebenso wie Manager, Hausfrauen und Stahlarbeiter. Sie alle können — meint Lauer — das natürliche Bewußtsein, das mit einem vom „normalen“ Menschen als Höhepunkt — etwa an einem unbeschwerten Ferientag — empfundenen Zustand gleichzusetzen ist, wiedererlangen.

Die vielfältigen Methoden des Jogas — das nicht nur aus den von Laien oft belachten „Verrenkungen“ besteht — sind nur Mittel, die zu einem gemeinsamen Ziel führen sollen. Ob es die körperlichen Übungen, von Ärzten häufig zu heilgymnastischen Zwecken angewendet, der psychische Schlaf oder Atem- und Entspannungsübungen sind: sie alle sollen, so wie der gemeinsame Gesang, Spannungen lösen und dadurch die tief im Bewußtsein „be-graben“ liegenden Probleme entwirren, wodurch der Mensch zu einem völlig neuen Selbstbewußtsein gelangen soll.

Das Wiener Jogazentrum — bereits das zweite, das Lauer zusammen mit seiner Frau begründet hat — erhielt erst dieser Tage offiziellen Vereinscharakter und ist nicht bestrebt, große Gewinne durch die fernöstliche Weisheit zu erzielen. Die Mitglieds- und Kursbeiträge sind niedrig, sie dienen nur der Erhaltung der Räumlichkeiten und des nötigsten — orangefarbenen — Inventars.

Der Besuch des indischen Swami soll Lauer und seinen Gefolgsleuten noch tieferes Eindringen in die östliche Lehre vom „bewußten“ Leben ermöglichen.

Sadhana for Sahasrara

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Vienna, Austria, 1971

We shall practice all meditations five minutes each.

In siddhasana or siddhayoniasana.

Hands in chin mudra.

Eyes are closed.

- Practice Ashwini mudra.

Do not work very much on your mind.

Allow distractions if they are there but continue

Ashwini Mudra

ca. 5 minutes

- Concentrate on the nose tip with the eyes closed in the same position.

ca. 1 minute

Concentrate on the nose tip, nasikagra, with the eyes closed.

ca. 2 minutes

Concentrate on the nose tip, with the eyes closed.

ca. 2 minutes

- Practice Vajroli

ca. 5 minutes

- Now practice union of prana and apana in the navel.

From Muladhara to the navel for ascending and

From throat to navel with descending, retention,

And feel the concentrated energy.

ca. 5 minutes

- Concentration on the natural breath between the navel and the throat with the attitude of the mantra So Ham, or maybe your own mantra:

Natural breath means imperceptible breath, conscious breathing, and natural breathing.

ca. 5 minutes

- Touching the chakras either with a flower or a thumb.

Muladhara,

Swadhisthana

Manipura

Anahata

Vishuddhi

Ajna

Vishuddhi

Anahata

Manipura

Swadhisthana

Muladhara

And this way continue yourself.

ca. 5 minutes

Now concentrate only for 3 minutes on the areas that I indicate.

Inside the forehead, the inner wall of the forehead,

The inner side of the right temple,

The inner side of the left temple,

Inner wall at the back side,

Inner side of the top of head, like the ceiling of a room,

At the level of your eyebrows extending from the front

to the very back is a floor,

Now, this is the hall.

The inside of the forehead is the front wall of the room,

The inside of the right temple is the right wall,

The inside of the left temple is the left wall,

The inside of the back of the head is the back wall,

The inner side at the top is the ceiling,

And at the level of the eyebrows is the floor of this hall.

Now we do it for sometime.

Front,

Right wall

Left wall

Back side

Top ceiling

And the floor

Front,

Right wall

Left wall

Back side

Top ceiling

And the floor

Now this is the room of which you have to become aware first.

Become aware of the extra space of the whole which is surrounded by four walls and a floor and a ceiling.

If necessary you can feel it on the rhythm of the in breath and outgoing breath synchronized with contraction and expansion.

ca. 2 minutes

The whole room

This empty space is the space for Sahasrara.

You can feel it with contraction and expansion

On the rhythm of the breath, if you like.

Chanting Om together

O O O M M M M

O O O M M M M

O O O M M M M

Hari Om Tat Sat

Relax yourself.

1977

April

Sri Swamiji and Swami Amritananda went to Sweden and London, England.

September

Sri Swamiji and Swami Amritananda went to Zinal, Switzerland, to address a conference organized by the European Union of National Federations of Yoga.

Meeting with a Paramahamsa

Rishi Arundhati

Rishi Arundhati relates seeing Sri Swamiji again after a few years and her return to Belfast after several years.

It was a few years since we had actually seen Swamiji. He had said to me before in London that we would not be seeing him for awhile. I did not ask why. Later I found out that he had spent a few years in old BSY in seclusion. We were taken to see the place on our first trip to Munger in 1999.

In 1977 we got a telephone call from Swami Pragyamurti in London saying that Swamiji had telephoned to say that he was coming to London from where he was in Sweden and that she should telephone Vasishtha and Arundhati and let them know. So we drove down to London from Newcastle upon Tyne and saw Swamiji again which was always such a treat.

I saw several people at the lecture who had been my students in Belfast. One was a fairly wealthy lady that had taken private as well as class sessions with me. At that time her husband had just passed away.

When I asked her if she remembered me her reply was, "How could I ever forget you, you changed my life. Then I was so sad and unhappy and not sure

what I would do with myself. Today I am very busy going into different businesses in Belfast and giving yoga courses".

I reminded her it was the yoga that changed her life, not me. They asked me to come back to Belfast and give some seminars and a teacher's training course which I did in 1977 1978 and 1979.

The only lecture we have for 1977 was given in London, England, at the Battersea Library on April 22, 1977 on the topic of the Transformation of Consciousness. Considering that a general talk on yoga would only lead to repetition of what the audience had heard from him before or had learned over the years since his first visit in 1968, he felt that a more important and much needed topic would be Personal Spiritual Evolution and Transformation of Individual Consciousness, which he then briefly elaborates by means of examples of Dhyana Yoga, Kriya Yoga, Ajapa Japa, etc. We have appended the short satsang that followed the lecture which allows Sri Swamiji to further elaborate some of the main points of the brief lecture.

Transformation of Consciousness

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

London, Battersea Library, April 22, 1977

Hari Om Tat Sat,

I came to Stockholm from India to direct an International Yoga Congress, and after ending that Congress I have come to London for the first time in many years. My hosts have organized this meeting for a talk on yoga, however I do not think that yoga needs any introduction. There are thousands and thousands of wonderful publications on this very important subject all over the world. There is no country and there is no city that does not have people having admiration for and experience in yoga, so it is not fit that I tell you what yoga can do for you and everyone. This is not the right time for me to preach yoga, nor the right people to whom I should speak in admiration of yoga.

Maybe you have something to ask about yoga, specific subjects pertaining to your own spiritual evolution or to your own mental and physical problems. Sometimes lately I have problems myself deciding what I should talk about. If I talk to you about the significance and importance of yoga, it is just mere repetition; and if I give you scientific data as to the kind of work done in that field and the scientific potential of yoga, I think most of you are already aware of this, and also what modern psychology has to say about yoga.

But when it comes to the subject of personal spiritual evolution and the transformation of individual consciousness, then I think I have a topic for all of you, and this is a very important topic for the whole of humanity. If humanity is not prepared to accept this concept of life today, it will have to do so sometime in the future. The most important thing in human life and this yoga can offer, is the transformation of a yogi or

of an aspirant, through the practices of yoga in general and meditation in particular.

When we use the word yoga we use it in a very great sense – it is not merely asanas, pranayama, mudras, bandhas, yoga nidra and so on. It is the science by which an internal change, an internal evolution takes place in the very depths of our being. This transformation cannot be felt from outside, although of course you





can see that some people become more healthy by the practice of yogasanas. Even as milk undergoes a state of transformation, also curd, also cotton, all matter undergoes a state of transformation when its ultimate substance and purpose are achieved. In the same manner a thought can be transformed, likewise an emotion, a desire, a passion, the lower passions can be transformed and the noble aspirations can be transformed.

This principle of transformation, this process of transformation, is the main purpose of yoga. I am not a competent authority on physics, so please do not mind if I make technical mistakes, but in physics, matter undergoes a transformation without which it can never manifest itself as energy, and as we all know, energy is inherent in matter. Since energy is inherent in matter, to release that energy, to emancipate that energy from matter, matter has got to undergo a state of transformation. If the matter cannot undergo a state of transformation, then matter remains matter and energy remains unmanifest. In the same manner, the mind has to undergo a state of transformation – if the

ultimate form of matter is energy, so the ultimate form of mind is Shakti and in order to evolve the mind has to manifest the Shakti aspect, and this transformation is automatically achieved through the practice of Dhyana Yoga. Dhyana Yoga is the yoga of awareness, awareness of meditation, but not merely of the process of withdrawing the mind from objective experience.

Some people feel that when we close the eyes and withdraw the mind from the objective, mundane, sensual awareness then we are escaping from reality, withdrawing ourselves from the realities of life, and thus a lot of misunderstanding has cropped up. We have come to understand that as and when we are able to withdraw our mind, our consciousness, from the outside, as and when we are able to become more aware internally, something is happening. What? This you have to understand. There are many ways to turn in – you practice mantra or ajapa japa, maybe Transcendental meditation, or Kriya Yoga – but when you turn inwards, what happens to you? Is it just a withdrawal of consciousness, is it just a superficial mental state, or is it an act of conversion, a transformation that is going on? What happens to matter when it is disintegrated? What happens to matter when its components are split? What happens to matter when it has to undergo a process of fission? The same thing happens to the mind when it goes through the process of pratyahara and dharana to samadhi – it is not a state of inertness, but a state of total awareness. I tell you this not from what the books say, but from personal experience – samadhi is not inertness, it is not a state of no knowledge, on the contrary samadhi is a process of total awareness and when I use the words total awareness, I mean the awareness of the cosmos inside and the knowledge of the cosmos outside. We call



the cosmos Brahmandas – the world outside, the world inside; you know that there is not only one universe, only one cosmos. On the material plane there is the cosmos of which we are aware as long as we are awake; the moment you enter meditation you enter a different realm, another universe.

When you start withdrawing yourself from the external objective field to the field of self-awareness, that is called pratyahara, retreat; and when you are able to disassociate yourself for a particular period of time from external objective awareness, then you are asked to focus your attention on one point, the symbol; and when you are able to focus your mind on one symbol for a given period of time and the awareness of the symbol becomes very steady – if it is OM it is OM, if it is RAM it is RAM, if it is a cross it is a cross, if it is a flower, it is a flower – then meditation begins.

Meditation begins when your mind is totally focused on a given symbol or a symbol of your choice. To make it clearer, once again – if I concentrate on my guru I should be able to overcome the distractions first,

not think of the guru with a host of thoughts hovering over my mind; if that happens then one must follow other yogic practices to fix the distractions of the mind. When the distractions are considerably minimized, then you should focus the mind, reduce the area of consciousness, and at the point of focusing the mind, meditation begins. This is the process of fission on the yogic plane – so the transformation of matter releases infinite, tremendous energy, and the transformation of mind releases Shakti and finally *jnana*, spiritual knowledge; and with this understanding everybody should follow a definite path of meditation.

It does not matter if you are not able to concentrate for thirty years, what is important is that you are continuing your practice. Modern man has a disease that he is flirting with life, he is flirting with truth, flirting with essence; mantras keep on changing, the path of meditation keeps on changing – oh, this doesn't work for me! How can spiritual practice work upon you? It is a matter of time, it takes time. If you want to saw wood, it takes half a minute, but if you want to saw steel, it takes a little longer and so on. In the same way, spiritual experiences depend upon clarity of mind, purity of consciousness, *chittashuddhi*, and how much sadhana you have done earlier. The moment you start meditation your expectations are too high – I hope I am not discouraging you, but this is a fact. Steadiness of mind, resolute will, conviction about what you are doing and knowing the path which you follow, that is what is needed in yoga, there is nothing difficult. Everything is a matter of time, but more than time, it is a matter of conviction and self-confidence. If a particular mantra comes to you, you can make it powerful and influential by your conviction and faith – persistent practice of the

mantra or any spiritual practice will bring you ample reward in time to come.

Anyway, I do not want to talk too much. The world, the universal mind, all is changing; the change has started all over the world, it has transcended religions, political 'isms' and linguistic barriers, and it seems that mankind is under the compulsion of a new consciousness, and this has been my experience. I started the work of yoga in 1964 with my first class on nineteenth January, and since this time I find that everywhere people have started thinking differently and more awareness of the necessity of spiritual life

is in the hearts of the people. The last generation did not understand the place of spiritual life or the place of yoga; a yogi was a misfit in society and yoga was a crazy philosophy, but this generation knows that the yogi is a blissful man and that yoga is definitely a compatible way of life. The next generation will perhaps think in a different way they might say that yoga is a must and I hope that will become the culture of every family, of every nation, and as we can get many things easily in the supermarket so we shall be able to get information and instructions on yoga

Hari Om Tat Sat



Q. Swamiji, will you please elaborate the point concerning the fact that mediation begins after focusing the mind?

Swamiji: The symbol is the basis for the mind to function, also called murti in Sanskrit, mandala in Tantra and also in modern psychology. You concentrate, and while you concentrate the symbol should stay inside, you should be able to visualize it vividly. There are two stages that the meditator can experience – one is the stage where the meditator withdraws and enters the state of *shoonya*, and there is no awareness of inside or outside, now there is awareness of name and form, now there is awareness of awareness; this is called the *Laya* state of samadhi, a samadhi where consciousness has been suspended, a lower samadhi; and in order to avoid staying in this state you should have a symbol. You should never say that God is formless, and that we should only worship the formless – He is formless, He is nameless and He has no dimension – but here it is not a question of God, here it is a question of integration and focusing and realization and transformation of your consciousness, and maybe ultimately that is God. That will come later on. The second stage is when you concentrate on your symbol and you miss it from the place as the mind runs round and round like a monkey, coming back like a pendulum. However, the mind loses awareness of that particular object, and you have a lot of visions, funny dreams, and then you have to bring the mind back again, so that your awareness of the object becomes continuous. There should be no interception, no obstruction, no curves, no difference and no variation – the consciousness should be like a straight line is what Patanjali says.

Patanjali says that when consciousness is stretched as one, without any interception, without any break, it is called *dhyana*, meditation. Now, what happens if I think of a flower, and there is a sound from somewhere which intercepts my thought, and then another thought comes and another, and the straight line is being intercepted by other lines; this is what is to be avoided in meditation, gradually, no second thought, but one thought, no second awareness, but one awareness called *advaita anaguti*, non-dual awareness. The form remains, the consciousness is transformed, the symbol remains, the consciousness undergoes a state of transformation; self-experience is also changing, experience is changing, the dimension of your awareness is changing. There is a moment when I forget that I am Swami Satyananada, awareness of time is lost, awareness of space is lost, but for some time I remember my name, slight awareness is there, or if this awareness of name and form is not continuous it comes off and on. . . Swami Satyananda . . . a man . . . the awareness of time, the awareness of space, the awareness of name and form, they alternate; it is like waves coming, sometimes there is shunyata, for a moment one blinks, for a moment one thinks. Inner awareness has to be maintained, in some form – your symbol – awareness of your symbol is your inner awareness.

If you lose this inner awareness then you slide into shunyata. This actually happened in my own case – about thirty years ago I was living with my guru, Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh, and one evening I sat down in lotus posture in my room and closed my eyes, and when I opened my eyes at 6 a. m. I was awfully happy because I thought that I had attained samadhi! Well,

naturally, I never knew time nor space, nor name nor form so I thought that I had finally reached samadhi but it was too early to tell Swamiji, who was still in his kutir, so I wrote down my experience in a large diary and asked the secretary to give it to Swamiji. The diary went to Swamiji and he read it – he is a very experienced and mature man, who has seen life, who has seen everything – and he just kept it. In the evening he asked me what was the matter, and I said that I had attained samadhi, and he said that I had not attained samadhi, but rather a state of Tamas, I had entered into inertia. Samadhi is not a state of **no** knowledge, it is a state of absolute knowledge, *param jnanam* not *ajnana*m. In samadhi you are aware of awareness, but of nothing else. Names die, forms die, time dwindles into nothing, space is annihilated, but there is a total existence of awareness and that is the existence of *Atman*, the Self. When that has been reached you have obtained the fruits of dhyana and the fruits of samadhi.

Q. Can you explain the idea of God, according to yoga?

Swamiji: The ultimate consciousness which is hidden in every man is the essence of God, or is God. The ultimate essence which is hidden behind the existence of everything, not only man; the outer part of existence is the gross body, the external form of existence is the superficial name and form – that is not the Truth – but behind the names and forms of every living thing, of every sentient and insentient existence in life there is a substratum and this substratum is the same in every living thing. Millions of people do not have millions of Selves, the substratum of everything is one; just as millions of houses in London are situated on one earth, in the same manner the names and forms, the gross



reality, the superficial structures are all based on the hidden underlying essence, and that essence in yoga is Ishwara – *Ishwara* means the controller, the controller of every aspect of existence.

Q. Would you say that there is any value in a form of meditation in which you do not concentrate but rather allow the thoughts to come and go indefinitely?

Swamiji: The question is very good and timely. When you are unable to maintain proper awareness of the symbol and you find that the mind has become restless and indifferent and lost in fantasies, then at that time you should withdraw and change to the practice of inner silence, *antar mouna*, rather than concentration on a symbol. There are two functions, one is letting the mind function and the second is giving the mind spontaneous freedom, and staying as a witness of the thoughts. If you do not do this then what will happen is that the mind will oppose the mind, and a personality split can take place. This practice is for those people whose minds are not under their control and who have not attained the pure state of consciousness; the moment they sit for meditation they become drowsy or they blink and oscillate, so they should practice inner silence, *antar mouna*, in which they do not oppose the mind, do not stop the thoughts, do not come into direct conflict with their personality, but rather give direct spontaneous expression to all behavior of the mind in the form of the witness. But once you have control over the mind's dissipations then this practice of *antar mouna* will not be timely – for people with restless minds, the practice of inner silence, for people with steady minds, the practice of concentration.

Q. For what purpose have we reincarnated on this earth?

Swamiji: I am sure about the purpose, which is to evolve into more powerful matter, to manifest the hidden forms of knowledge and to bring more precious things to humanity. Mankind, right from the beginning, has been trying to bring about precious ideas, precious philosophies, powerful sciences, art, music and maybe even peace of mind; in the same manner the ultimate purpose of every yoga aspirant should be to grow in creativity, to grow in creation, so that he is able to give something to the coming generation. This is how I interpret it.

Q. You said that when one concentrates, one undergoes a certain fission; could you describe that kind of fission?

Swamiji: Well, not exactly in the language of science. The mind is not just a bundle of habits, not just gross matter, but a comparatively subtle matter; it has components, it is composed of various tendencies, various *vrittis*, various patterns.

What is mind? You can enumerate hundreds of items it involves. Just as matter can be broken into elements, so the mind can be split into many items, and the main division is that of the three *gunas* – *rajas*, dynamism, *tamas*, inertia, *sattwa*, equilibrium; after that it has to be experienced in different forms, jealousy, love, anger, pride, phobia, anxiety, suspicion, doubt, apprehension, fear, revenge and many more, and these are the *vrittis*, not the mind itself, not consciousness. For instance, if I have a gold ring, and the ring is round, does that make gold round? It is a pattern. Similarly, anger, jealousy,

passion etc., which we know and which we do not know, they are the *vrittis*, the tendencies, the *samskaras*; they are the superimposed habits or conditions of the mind, but not the mind. Now, if you wish to realize the true form of the mind you must remove these. If you want to know what gold is, what do you do? Melt it? But that is not the form of gold. God is neither horizontal nor vertical, round nor oval – gold is the quality not the form. In the same way the mind has to be made free from associations, habits, tendencies, which it has either accumulated or which have followed it through the process of evolution.

How are you going to do this? In the process of meditation, in *antar mouna*, the *vrittis* come and go, passion, hatred, anger, clear thoughts come, sometimes a little, sometimes plenty, sometimes too much and sometimes nothing and we continue seeing them without opposing them; we do not criticize them, we do not dislike them, we do not like them, we just see them as an impartial spectator as far as possible. In the course of this witnessing of the tendencies of the mind they start to fall away. The spiritual aspirant gradually drops the tendencies of the mind through various practices until the mind alone remains in its pristine glory, in its original form, which is the Self, the Atman; some call it God, some Allah, some Brahman, some Spirit. When this Atman is associated with karma, with the *samskaras* it is known as the mind. Mind minus the elements is equal to Atman that is the equation. Atman plus all the elements is equal to the mind, that is the second equation.

Q. What is the basic aim of meditation, and once one has achieved that where do we go from there?

Swamiji: One goes from realization to realization, one grows in realization, and you understand things more and

more. After all, humanity has grown through centuries and who has brought humanity to this stage of evolution? Was it barbarians? No! Rather some compassionate and benevolent mahatmas, after persistent, timeless efforts have brought humanity to the level of today, where love is respected not falsehood. Who brought this culture? A few sharp-sighted, very intuitive, perfectly thinking individuals in every period of time, just pushed humanity a little further, by force they pushed it further. If those people of realization had not been there then today hatred would be more respected than love, which can happen; there were times when men who spoke lies were honored, when men who made wars were worshipped, but not today. When you come nearer to the Self, the Atman, nearer to Reality, the Truth is revealed to you, and this you must experience yourself.

Q. How does one recognize truth: It is said that you should be true to yourself, and that there is a universal truth.

Swamiji: There is a universal truth and that truth has to be realized by the incessant process of self-purification and self-enlightenment. With the eyes and vision that we have we are limited, and unless we enlarge the scope of our vision, unless our horizons are widened, it is not possible for everybody to have this deeper understanding of truth. In order to have a deeper understanding about truth, vision must be widened through yoga, and when the vision is widened the truth is before you, and you know that that is the truth. There is a beautiful story about a blind man who went to the optician to see if he had anything to help him see, and the optician tried many different kinds of glasses and nothing worked, and then he discovered that the man did not have eyes at

all. What can an optician do with a man who does not have eyes? Similarly, as long as we have a narrow vision of reality and truth, it is not possible to understand the full import of reality and truth. It is better to first make a departure from our total limitations.

Q. I understand your answer, but at what stage, and who would be the judge to say that we had arrived and could see the truth?

Swamiji: Who is going to be the judge of truth? Truth is self-effulgent. Self is self-revealing, it exists by itself and truth is known, humanity endorses it, people can see it. Because truth is self-effulgent everyone can see that. The sun does not have to say I am the sun, we say yes you are the sun. Truth is a shining brilliance of the personality.

Q. You refer to Shakti. Is this and kundalini the same thing, which I believe can be raised by transmission by the presence of a master, and how does this relate to total awareness?

Swamiji: The Shakti about which I talk is definitely the same as Kundalini Shakti. There is no other Shakti. But of course in some aspirants it awakens spontaneously, and in others it has to follow a process of rigorous spiritual discipline on a path of practice such as Kriya Yoga, pranayama or mantra.

Q. Is awareness something that happens very gradually, or do you wake up all in one go, all of a sudden?

Swamiji: Awareness can grow gradually and awareness can explode suddenly also. Both can happen, but it

is better if the awareness grows gradually, as people cannot always cope with the experience of an explosion.

Q. How can we love more so that everything we do is an act of love?

Swamiji: I have an answer for your question, which is a very difficult one, and which I cannot do complete justice to because I have never really practiced it. I have lived a very independent life always, and have had no personal or intimate connections with anything in life, neither individuals nor objects. Neither did I surrender my loyalty to anything, but there has been one person in my life who has permeated my consciousness through and through, not that I wanted it, no, but somehow this has happened, and this is my guru. I do not know if he loved me, but I do know that I do not love him. Love is intense awareness, total awareness, non-dual awareness of that one person, but in my case this did not happen. I never thought much about him, but in my final analysis I think that he loved me and always thought about me. Even when he entered maha-samadhi and freed himself from this mortal frame, he became so much aware of me that wantingly or unwantingly, I have to work. I do not like many things I do, not that I am dissatisfied, but I do not like going from country to country, from home to home, lecturing, talking, discussing and singing; I like my solitary kutir in Munger where I can close the door and listen to the song of the mosquitoes. I do not like ashram organization, the institution, the establishment of the Divine Life Society which was built by me in Rishikesh, but my guru loves me so much, has so much faith in me that he has chosen me, incompetent though I am to be chosen.

So, you were asking about love, and maybe I am talking about something else; but I think that when a guru loves his disciple he is always aware of him, always thinks about him and he is suffering from disciple neurosis. When the disciple thinks about his guru too

much he is suffering from guru neurosis. This is negative love. When you love a person so, think of nothing else, you can not just praise him, but you start to think of him as a wretched man, and this is negative love, a strong form of Bhakti. As in the story of the Ramayana,

it is said that the ten-headed monster, Ravan, who was Sri Rama's rank enemy and fought him was also his greatest devotee because he thought about him day and night. Hence there are positive and negative aspects of love. Awareness is love. If you are aware of God all the time, you love Him, if you are aware of chocolate all the time you love chocolate, and so on.

Q. I don't have experience of yoga, but I practice Tai Chi and I would like to know how it is related to yoga and perhaps bio-feedback as well.

Swamiji: I think the simplest way to compare Tai Chi and yoga and all these comparative sciences which flourish in different countries is to start practicing. If you practice yoga, you start with exercises, with the Surya Namaskara, and then you move on to pranayama and finally meditation.

Q. But can I continue with Tai Chi?

Swamiji: Yes, why not? There is no harm. After all, fifteen or twenty minutes does not matter at all. If you are serious about this I suggest that you practice meditation every day for a short time and within two or three months you will be able to do the yoga asanas. It is a peculiar system, if you do asanas you can meditate better and if you meditate you can do asanas better. The body will become very flexible, so Tai Chi and yoga and all these systems can be practiced side by side.

Everyone has now become quiet, and when you return home you will think that you should have asked other questions, but I shall end here with a story.

The story concerns four friends, one was a herbalist, one was a musician, a drummer, the third



was a philosopher and the fourth was an astrologer. They all went on an outing, a picnic, and when it was time to eat they could not find much in a nearby village, so they decided to eat something anyway. The drummer, a thin man with a protruding glottis, was to cook; the astrologer was to get a few coconuts from a tree; the herbalist went to the market for vegetables, and the philosopher was to get spices, oil and butter and so on.

When the herbalist got to the market he found that all the vegetable were bad in some way or the other – potatoes had too much starch, spinach can cause kidney stones and this and that. Finally he came back with no vegetables because he found fault with all of them.

The astrologer climbed the tree for the coconuts, and when he had one in his hand he heard a donkey neighing, which he immediately took to be an ill omen, so he checked it in his book and found that if you hear a donkey neighing you must leave whatever you have in your hand.

The philosopher went out with a tin and got many things, spices and when the oil was being poured out into a bottle a philosophical problem came to his mind – whether God is the basis of creation or creation is the basis of God; who is the basis and who is the ultimate, and whether the oil is in the bottle or the bottle in the oil. So after thinking about this for some time he toppled the bottle and found that the oil was in the bottle.

And the fourth friend was cooking the rice, and the lid of the pot was making a noise as it boiled, but the cook, an expert drum and tabla player found that the lid was not keeping time and he tried to correct this, and eventually spilled the whole pot of rice.

They all gathered together and there was nothing to eat. So in life, it is the practical application of knowledge which is important rather than more technical and sophisticated knowledge. If we know little and work well, for the purpose, I think that we shall have something to eat, but if we work too scientifically and too correctly we shall never get anything in yoga.

Hari Om Tat Sat



1979

July–September

Sri Swamiji again travelled extensively overseas, conducting yoga programs in Singapore, Athens, Barcelona, Antwerp, Zinal, Copenhagen, Paris and London. He presided over the International Yoga Convention in Saint Patrick's College, Dublin, Ireland, which was arranged by the Belfast and Dublin Yoga Centres. He then presided over the Zinal Yoga Conference, Switzerland, organized by EUNFY.

The lecture we have for 1979 was given in London, England, at the Bharata Vidya Bhavan on September 18, 1979, on the topic of Tantra and Meditation. Starting from a brief characterization of Tantra correcting widely prevalent misconceptions he gives a positive answer to the question of there being such a thing as Tantrik Meditation. He then characterizes the differences between tantrik meditation and other forms of meditation. We have again appended the short satsang that followed the lecture which allows Sri Swamiji to further elaborate some of the main points of his brief lecture.



Tantra and Meditation

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

London, England, September 18, 1979

Bharata Vidya Bhavan,

The subject is going to be a very controversial one which is much misunderstood. But it has survived throughout the test of time and history. Open challenges were thrown at the system, but every time it was victorious. That is because it is not an institution or merely a philosophy. It is a system which helps man to improve the quality of his body and mind. It shows him the way to transform the structure of his ailing personality. So this is the subject of Tantra meditation.

It is not my matter to criticize and I am not going to do so. I do not care how people have explained Tantra in their beautiful books. Whether I agree or not is a different matter.

What I have been taught about Tantra from my gurus and teachers and how it has brought a metamorphosis in the entire structure of my thinking obliges me to speak about Tantra time and again.

First of all, Tantra may be explained as the most ancient spiritual civilization of mankind. We have given the process a name: Tantra. Not only in this century but for ever and ever into the past, man has been exploring the possibility of expanding the frontiers of his consciousness. Everybody was not necessarily aware of the terrible limitations of his mind.

Even today there are people, and they are in millions, who are not aware of the limitations of their mind. But still we have a growing population in this century who has experienced the limitations of the mind. At the same time they have had experiences of the unlimited mind, the expanded consciousness.

Tantra has two objectives. One is how to expand consciousness, and two is how to liberate the energy. Many have always been trying for these two things consciously, as well as, unconsciously.

There arises a question. If there is a Tantric meditation, is there any other form of meditation as well? Sure, there are other forms which are equally effective. Then what is the difference between the Tantric and other forms of meditation?

In other systems of meditation, emphasis is laid on concentration of mind and control of the *vrittis*, the perceptions. But in Tantra we by-pass the behaviors of the mind, and do not come into confrontation with the nature of the mind. This is the basic difference.

Etymologically, Tantra is a combination of two ideas. One idea is the expansion of mind and the other is the liberation of energy. The meaning of Tantra therefore is a process by which we expand our consciousness and thereby liberate the energy.

What is expansion of consciousness? We know that our mind has its limitations. It receives information through the sensory channels, and depending upon this reception it has knowledge, cognition and perception.

If you have no eyes you will be unable to see, and if you are deaf the sense of hearing fails. The senses provide stimuli upon the basis of which the mind functions. This is therefore the limitation of human consciousness. The perceptions are dependent upon

the quality, quantity and procedure of the sensory activities.

Is it then possible, if the sensory channels are disassociated, if the consciousness of the brain is isolated, to have cognition, perception and knowledge? Is cognition a quality of the mind or is it dependent upon the stimuli that is sent to the brain?

In Tantra the consciousness is a homogeneous entity. Even without association of the senses, it is possible to have knowledge, cognition and perception. But we do not have it, because our consciousness is not given the chance to experience the homogeneity. The consciousness is homogeneous, yet not all of it is functioning. In this relative world of senses, a part or an aspect of consciousness is in operation. The other areas of consciousness are silent; they are dormant, inactive. If we know the way to operate these silent areas of consciousness then we can experience the homogeneous quality of mind. This homogeneous quality of the mind is the subject matter of Tantra.

Through the practices of Dhyana Yoga, by practicing meditation, what we achieve is the total awareness of the entire mind. This is possible only when the consciousness is isolated, and this isolation of consciousness is very important.

In Tantra the science of kundalini is very important. At the base of the spine there is a very important center known as Muladhara chakra. At the top of the spine is another important center known as Ajna chakra. In between these two psychic centers are four more centers and the six centers are situated in an important channel known as Sushumna. This channel connects the Muladhara chakra at the base of the spine with Ajna chakra at the top. Sushumna is very important in



the practices of yoga in general, and in the practice of meditation in particular.

When the consciousness is isolated, when it is disconnected from the sensory association, then begins the vibration at the bottom of the spine in Muladhara chakra. In Tantra the practices of meditation are organized and the system is created in such a way that first of all the energy resonates in Muladhara chakra.

As I already told you, the usual way to meditate is by closing our eyes and face our mental perceptions. As we

face our mental perceptions we keep on fighting against them. We hate some of them, we do not like them and that sometimes brings a psychological tragedy. We are not aware of this. For us meditation has reached a state of mind in which everything has become what we call unconscious; as though meditation is not a dynamic process of life. As if meditation is a total elimination of the functions of mind and consciousness. At least in Tantra this is unacceptable.

What is the fun of eliminating the structure, in hypnotizing the processes of mind, what after all are we going to gain by that? The meditation should be aimed at creating a process of activity, dynamism; in the language of Tantra, awakening.

The present state of your mind must follow a process of awakening and not a process of hypnotism. This is the fundamental difference between the process which most people understand as meditation and the Tantric meditation.

I believe it is impossible to awaken the mind by suppressing it; by withdrawing the perceptions of the mind. Mind is continuous activity, a continuous flow of events and experiences. Every experience that arises in the mind is in the form of energy patterns. Every experience is the resonance of a wave of energy. A thought is not psychological stuff or a biological action; it is a resonant wave of energy.

How are you going to define experience or perceptions? What is cognition? What is knowledge? Resonant waves of energy. And what are you going to do in meditation? You are switching them off and that is not the way. Unless the awakening takes place in the psychic realm of the human being it is never going to be possible to reach those areas of meditation.

I am using the word meditation because I have to use it. I would prefer to use the phrase 'Dhyana Yoga', but this is very difficult for many people to understand.

The consciousness has to expand, to keep on flowing through and through, but you need not come into confrontation with the area of perception. When you practice an awakening takes place in Muladhara chakra. It does not matter what is happening to your mind. It does not matter what you are thinking. It also does not matter what the nature is of the fantasies and imaginations in your mind. Nor does it matter if your mind is thinking horrible things. That is the nature of the mind.

Mind is composed of 24 principles or natures, classified into the three different areas of sattvic, rajasic and tamasic. Mind is not composed of purity alone. Purity alone cannot be the whole of mind; that is the mistake our religious personality has made. Total purity or total evil cannot be mind. Mind is a composition of '*sattwa*', equilibrium; '*rajas*', activity, dynamism; '*tamas*', inertia. These three qualities frame the nature or structure of the mind. This being so, we have to find a different path altogether.

In Kundalini Yoga the awakening of Muladhara chakra by certain practices has been accepted. That is because awakening at Muladhara chakra causes the waves of energy, Shakti to rise high through Sushumna nadi to Ajna chakra.

Ajna chakra is the monitoring center. It is translated from Sanskrit as meaning 'the command center', 'ordering center', 'monitoring center'. You have to know how to monitor Ajna chakra, and to close the eyes and bury the perceptions by force is not the right way.

It is wrong to consider that thought is psychological stuff. In this physical body, according to Hatha Yoga

sciences, there are two forms of energy functioning at every level of existence. One energy is known as '*Prana Shakti*', the vital energy. The other is *Manas Shakti* and is the mental energy which feeds all the mental patterns.

When Ajna chakra is awakened by the practices, then it monitors instructions and sends waves into the higher centers of the brain. The highest center is known as Sahasrara chakra, the crown lotus, the multi-petal lotus. So awakening then takes place in Sahasrara chakra.

By the way, when Muladhara chakra is awakened and the kundalini is activated, then the energy passes through the psychic centers situated on the way, and activates all of them. The silent areas of consciousness are those centers which it is the objective of Tantra to awaken.

Tantric meditation is not achieved if you just close your eyes. In the practices of Tantra, the practices of kriya are therefore of utmost importance. Kriya Yoga practices bring about a change of energy level in the whole structure, and this energy level is known as the level of Shakti. We have therefore been telling people in the east and the west that we have to know the objective of meditation.

There are of course those people who need meditation for tranquility, for soothing the tensions in the nervous system, for lowering the blood pressure and creating a state of relaxation. For such people it is not necessary that they do meditation because pratyahara alone is sufficient.

When you isolate the consciousness from experience there is a state called *pratyahara*, when there is absolute tranquility and the physical body experiences peace, relaxation. For them any practice will do very well, so that is why many forms of meditation are being practiced by people all over the world.

But for those who are aspirants and very sincere and have become aware that this body is not blood, flesh and bone, but that it is a composition of energy; that this Shakti can be awakened, then for them are designed the practices of Kriya Yoga.

The practices of Kriya Yoga form the main spiritual practices in Tantra. It is not a system in which you simply close the eyes, but it is a system in which you activate each and every organ, system and aspect of your whole existence.

The formation of Shakti is a most ancient and primal power. During the course of evolution, the energy has been manifesting itself in different stratas and dimensions. When we have come to the evolution of life then this energy is trying to find a way of going up.

In the spinal column there are three important channels. In the center is Sushumna, on the right is Pingala and on the left side Ida. These three *nadis*, channels are defined in Tantra as *Ida* the carrier of mental energy, and *Pingala* the carrier of pranic energy. These two flow all day and night. When you stop the flow of these two types of energy, then *Sushumna* begins to flow. Through the left nostril flows the *Ida* and through the right *Pingala* and when you stop both the flows then there is activity in the lower center of the spinal column, in Muladhara chakra.

In the practice of pranayama, the breath retention known as *kumbhaka* has an impact on Muladhara chakra. Actually, the retention of prana in the practice of *kumbhaka* is the proper definition of pranayama. Inhalation and exhalation are incidental processes. Therefore, the practitioner must make himself expert in the practice of *kumbhaka*. There is an effect immediately when the breath is retained.

The practices of asana, pranayama, mudras and bandhas have an ultimate bearing upon the awakening of Sushumna nadi. If this nadi does not wake up, no matter what method is employed, meditation will not take place. Even if you do not care about the nature of the mind, if you have a technique by which you can send energy waves through Sushumna, mind is automatically transcended. You do not have to control the mind; the premise is that you have to transcend the mind.

I am here not to teach you as to what the practice of meditation of Tantra is, because you have a center here. It is a type of introduction which I have wanted to give you, because people are often making a mistake. I am sorry to tell you but we are always making a mistake, and from where this has arisen I do not know.

We close our eyes and we want to close our mind. Why do we want to do that? Is it necessary to stop the mind; is it possible to stop it? Is it not possible that you can liberate energy by keeping the mental activities intact? Yes, it is possible.

The mind has to be made homogeneous. You have to expand it and at the same time wherever you are, you have to develop the awareness of another existence, another dimension.

When you practice asana, pranayama or other Hatha Yogic practices, they are practices of Tantra. Yoga as we know it in the west is not an independent system. Yoga is an off-shoot of Tantra, it is a practical system and every asana or pranayama gives a mind awakening in the structure of the chakras.

Asanas and pranayama are used for therapy; that is alright, they do help in so many diseases but the purpose of asanas and pranayama was to give mild awakening to the higher centers in this physical body.

Hari Om Tat Sat

Q. As I understand increasing awareness and increasing consciousness is something which becomes wider and wider. But when I first begin to become more aware, I become more aware of my own mind and other people's minds. It is very easy to get bogged down instead of widening out. Can you say something about this please?

Swamiji: Sure. When the awakening of kundalini takes place in any degree, at that time the silent areas of the brain come into operation. As you know, only a part of the brain is functioning. That is, only one part of the brain is participating in the activities of life, whilst the majority of the brain is silent.

What is the quality, what are the properties of these silent areas of the brain? What you are talking about pertains to the active part of the brain. You are practicing something which is affecting the conscious, the active or the operating area of the brain; that brain which has been receiving prana, stimulation and information through the sensory channels.

Even if you cut the sensory channels, isolate that particular part of the brain, it still has samskaras in it, awareness patterns in it. That brain is brooding over those patterns and is aware of those patterns. Those patterns are sometimes very powerful.

Here I am not talking about those patterns or that particular pattern which you are talking about. There is intellectual awareness in this active area of the brain which operates through the medium of buddhi and is able to create so many impressions. You can feel yourself as one with all, like an atom, as the center or as omnipresent. This is not necessarily the effect of the awakening of the silent areas. This could be a very fine experience of the intellectual part of the brain. This happens to most of us.

We know there are silent areas of the brain which have their own language archetypes, qualities and experiences. We are trying to evolve them one by one, not all at once. One by one; they may have millions of circuits, and in this life we may be able to evolve just one.

When that experience takes place it is not an intellectual experience. That experience is so convincing and so true to your knowledge that you understand everything. Your questions are answered. Therefore, the awakening of kundalini is more important than trying to widen the range of experience.

Q. You said we have to know how to monitor Ajna chakra. Who is 'you'? Is your mind you or is your thought you?

Swamiji: The individualized consciousness is you during the sadhana. When you are practicing sadhana there is an individualized consciousness which is directing the whole process. This 'you' undergoes a continuous process of evolution. It remains you but it is not the same concept of you as it was a few years previously. There is a constant evolution in the construction of you. Of course you may say that in Nirvikalpa Samadhi 'you' is completely dissolved, I agree but here I am talking about that 'you' or that 'I' who is at the helm of evolution.

As long as this duality of awareness is there the sadhana continues, when the duality of awareness is suspended then the consciousness becomes homogeneous.

I have always been saying that individual mind is a concept. It is a hypothesis, but it is there all the same.

Q. You talked about Tantra as being a civilization, but I can not see the link between civilization and the practices you regard as Kriya.

Swamiji: A lot will have to be said about it. As far as we know the Atlantis civilization was aware of the different Tantric practices. They were aware of thoughts and other forms of human experiences being present in the human mind as archetypes. That is to say that every form of knowledge has its symbol in the Universal mind, as you also have the language in a computer. That they realized.

These archetypes were understood in their geometrical forms, which we know in the science of Tantra as *yantras*. With the help of these yantras those people in that civilization were able to organize knowledge, create a structure of experience, and at the same time help a person to become aware of the dimensions of his psychic personality.

Well, some crisis must have happened and during that period there must have been a great exodus and some of the people did manage to get out of it. That civilization went as far as the Latin American countries, the European continent, the Indian sub-continent and to the Far East.

It will be too much for me to talk about all that. But I have been to different countries and have been surprised in Columbia to see in the district of Tolema in St. Augustine's Museum, evidence of the practices of neti, uddiyanabandha and vipareeta karani mudra. There are also yantras of two intersecting triangles representing the union of Shiva and Shakti, and the serpent symbolizing the flow of rhythmic energy. There are other instances of such evidence everywhere in different cultures.

In India this tradition was quietly and silently maintained with the help of the conscious people of the country. Otherwise, in almost all the other countries this tradition has been completely lost due to historical accidents and ravages of time.

If you read through the most ancient books of Vedas, Upanishads and the Puranas, you come to understand that this Tantric civilization and culture is very ancient, and was the basis of knowledge in ancient times.

In recent times the basis of knowledge has been language, pictures and diagrams. It is only very recently that the scientists have discovered the truth that the mind has its own archetypes, forms and languages, and that the understanding of the language and perception and in fact everything depends upon that which the Universal Mind already contains. So that civilization which we are talking about was a civilization which realized, recognized and understood the reality of Universal Mind and not the individual mind. Even now I say that individual mind is just a concept, a hypothesis.

Q. In the west there is a considerable amount of freedom and many sadhakas have equated the path of Tantra with one of permissiveness. Can you give us your experience of Tantra in India?

Swamiji: Tantra is neither Indian nor non-Indian. It is a particular philosophy realized by great men centuries ago who happened to live in a land which is now known as India. Saints may be within a geographical boundary depicting their citizenship, but they are not in fact bound by any geographical boundary or religious denomination. I was born into a Hindu family, but I can not help it.

Those great saints were thinking about the realization of the Absolute, how one could realize one's spiritual consciousness. So they started thinking about Hatha and Bhakti Yoga, but they found that there were people in this world who were unable to follow that path. Their whole personality was saturated in rajoguna, in the physical body. So, therefore, they had to devise some technique whereby one could continue the same lifestyle and evolve spiritually.

According to Tantra, sexual life is not anti-spiritual, but at the same time it does not say that you have to do it. It is a very controversial topic. We have to view sexual life purely from the spiritual point of view. Tantra states very clearly that the purpose of sexual life is threefold. That is progeny, pleasure and samadhi.

Most of us have been practicing sexually for the sake of progeny and for the sake of pleasure. But have never convinced ourselves that this could be a spiritual practice culminating in a spiritual experience.

There is a point which is known as Muladhara chakra and it is the seat of kundalini. The awakening of kundalini can take place in many ways and Tantra says that sexual practice is one of the ways. For many centuries man has considered sexual life so something that gives pleasure, that is all. He has never gone beyond it and tried to know the spiritual consequence or outcome of sexual interaction between the two forces of energy.

Man and woman are two different forms of energy. One is negative and the other positive energy as understood by modern science. These two energies must unite in order to form a current of power. The man and the woman are known as Shiva

and Shakti, and the concept of these two is in order to clarify the two types of energy that flow throughout the universe.

In every aspect of this creation you will always find the positive and negative forces of energy. This can be seen in prana and mind, prana is Shiva, mind is Shakti. I am talking about Ida and Pingala. When prana and mind, that is Ida and Pingala unite in Ajna chakra, there is awakening of Sushumna, the spiritual consciousness. Ida is mind and Pingala is prana and these two respectively represent the two opposite forces.

Coming back to Tantra, the physical union of man and woman should not be viewed from the moral and ethical point of view. Just because we see animals engaged in sexual actions does not mean that our sexual actions are of the same category and degree. Whatever man does, he has a purpose, whilst animals act out of compulsion without any purpose.

What is happening in animal life and that which is happening in human life is the same, notwithstanding that there is a basic difference in that the animal does not know what he is doing. The animal is under the force of *prakriti*, nature, and the basic urge, whilst man knows what he is doing. I am doing it for progeny, some kind of pleasure or for samadhi.

Tantra has explored and proved the possibility of raising the consciousness by means of the most normal action in man. Why not exploit it, why not utilize it? Everyone's sexual actions should be utilized for the awakening of kundalini.

That is the approach of Tantra. We are not taught these things correctly. There are always those who are perverted and take the cover of Tantra to promote their perverted actions and similarly with

yoga. Such perversions have taken place from time to time in history of our society, but the truth remains the same.

Q. Everywhere and all over the world, people are getting into a mood and are trying to practice yoga and meditation more and more for self-realization. What makes these people participate in these intensive sadhana courses where they come in hundreds? They leave their family for some time and lead their life in calmness and quietness.

Swamiji: When one attains mental peace he attains everything in life, and mental peace is something that man attains after he has been able to communicate with his inner being. Unless one is able to unite his mind with his inner being, one can never experience mental peace. Dissipations, distractions, wavering, disturbance and wanderings of the mind are natural manifestations of our animal incarnation and existence.

That is the state of *tamas* and *rajas*, *tamoguna* and *rajoguna*. The mind has to evolve from the base instinct to the spiritual heights, to the *sattvic* climax. So when we participate in these intensive spiritual camps what is happening is that a great revolution is taking place within ourselves. This is happening in the form of the transition of our consciousness, from *tamoguna* to *rajas* and from *rajoguna* to *sattva*, the total and absolute equilibrium.

Our external life is a manifestation of our state of mind, and if we have to influence our external life it is better if we create an opportunity for transformation in our inner being. If we are trying to affect the change in our external by being other means, then that is not going to help really.

The first thing that one has to remember therefore in this context, is to bring the energies of the mind to one focal point. The practice of meditation and concentration is a very powerful practice which ultimately transforms the structure of human personality, the mind and consequently the external life.

If someone feels that he is unhappy, restless and full of panic in himself, perhaps the easiest thing that he should do is to develop the practice of concentration and meditation.

When the senses are in contact with their objects, then they affect the mind, the consciousness. The mind is stimulated and agitated by the impressions created by the senses, with the help of the objects.

In the first place, in concentration we have to deprive the mind of this supply of stimuli. Therefore, the practice which we do is to cut off the supply line. Through this line the mind is supplied with impressions. That supply line is fact. This practice in Raja Yoga is known as the sadhana of '*pratyahara*', withdrawal of senses.

There are thousands of these practices of *pratyahara*. Kirtan, which you sang before I came, is an example when viewed from the point of Raja Yoga on the practice of *pratyahara*. Because when you were practicing kirtan, automatically the superficial sense impressions were cut off. This is just one example. The more you sing kirtan the better is the form of *pratyahara*. The melody, rhythm, sweetness and grandeur of music promote the spontaneity. If you could get into it more and more, the *pratyahara* in kirtan could get to the point where you would lose even the awareness of yourself. When the practice of *pratyahara* is complete, for a moment one forgets oneself. This however should not be mistaken for being in a state of *samadhi*.

At the end of the perfection of *pratyahara*, no matter whether you do it through *trataka*, Nada Yoga or Kirtan Yoga, there is a point when mind is completely deprived of the experiences and impressions, the mind becomes quiet. The practice of *pratyahara* automatically leads you to the point of concentration.

If you have done well with the practices of *pratyahara* it will be easier for you to practice *dharana*, concentration, holding one form, one idea before the mind. Here crystallization of the mental energy takes place. The mind which is otherwise aware of all and sundry becomes aware of one thing, one form and one object. When the awareness of one object remains in the mind for a particular period of time, if it stays there, transformation takes place. This transformation is known as *dhyana*, meditation.

That is why I have already been telling people that they do not need to meditate, it happens. So, you have to try to withdraw your mind. You have to try to fix your mind on a point I agree, but you do not have to meditate because it happens spontaneously. Meditation is a result of successful concentration. When the form upon which you transfix your mind absorbs the total consciousness of the mind, the transformation that takes place is meditation. That is *dhyana*.

So, in yoga all the different practices you have learned, taught or practiced are in fact not practices of meditation. There is no practice of meditation, it is an experience. Meditation is not an effort; it is a state of being. You are just there. But *pratyahara* is a practice and the different techniques in yoga like *pranayama*, *mudra*, *bandha* or Nada Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, kirtan, Japa Yoga, *ajapa japa*, or Kriya Yoga are the items of *pratyahara* and *dharana*.

Another point which I want to stress is that the practices of asanas have a great bearing and role to play in transforming the structure of the mind. In yoga, the body, mind and soul are classified as three, but in fact they are one. When we speak of the body, mind and spirit in yoga please remember that we are not talking about three different entities. We are talking about the three different states of manifestation of one and the same thing.

This body is not just the physical body. In its essence there is the mental consciousness which is the spiritual consciousness. How do we understand it? Firstly take matter; we will talk about elementary physics for the time being.

What is matter? It is what we can see, perceive, visualize. Through a certain process if you split matter, what emerges out of the matter? You call them the elements, and where did they come from? Did not they emerge from the depth of the matter? That means that the matter was not matter itself, that the substance which we had was not just matter. You saw that as matter but behind that there was a dormant power in it. So you break it to produce elements and finally what happens is that energy is produced. This energy we have released was also inherent in the depths of the matter. This was an example.

In the same way this physical body seems to be matter, a substance. Bone, marrow, blood, muscle, nerves and so on. If this substance, this matter, this body is split, what will come out of it? The mind. Therefore the practice of asanas should not be regarded as physical exercises. They are undoubtedly physical because the physical glands, nervous and hormonal systems are involved. However, they have

an effect upon the psychic body. I do not mean all the asanas, but some asanas do have a bearing upon the psychic body.

The practices of Hatha Yoga, neti, dhauti – the six systems of purification are not just the means to clean the body. They are more than that. We in Hatha Yoga visualize that behind this physical body is the mental body and behind the mental body is the spiritual consciousness.

The practices of Hatha Yoga, asanas, pranayama and pratyahara are all intended to develop a consciousness from within us. Even as a scientist develops energy from within matter, in the same way a yogi is experimenting on this body and considers the body as the base.

Within this body the yogi becomes aware of the distance. Within this body he becomes aware of time, space and object. Finally there is an experience which is known as the Divine experience or Self experience. People have different names for that experience. Devotees call it God experience, Raja yogis call it *samadhi*, Buddhists call it *nirvana*. Others call it emancipation, yet others call it salvation. Vedantans call it *Atma anubhuti*, Self-experience.

I think the ultimate goal of yoga is to have an Absolute experience, an experience in which you, me, all and everything is seen as one. That is the vision of Reality and that is the purpose for which we are practicing, teaching and preaching yoga.

I have come to the conclusion that if we want to change ourselves, then we have to start with the mind. If we want to change the world, we will have to tackle the minds and not just the men. Unless the mind becomes quiet and peace is attained, the distractions eliminated, then neither me nor the whole world will

become peaceful. Evolution of man can never take place unless the mind is transformed.

The practices in the form of Raja Yoga, Hatha, Bhakti and Jnana Yoga are intended for this great transformation of men and his mind.

Q. I would like to know what you feel about this time in history, because I do not know what it is but we are on the edge of something new.

Swamiji: The history of mankind has been a history of spiritual evolution and right from the primitive stages up to our modern age he has always been a seeker. He has been trying to solve a riddle and trying to know something which yet remains unknown.

Up to a few centuries ago things were going on very well. People used to practice their respective spiritual life, but in the last two or three centuries something happened to our society as a whole. Man turned towards materialistic ways and his mind then became extroverted. Gradually awareness of external things predominated in the mind, things that were visible to the senses, known by the mind. But with this gradual departure from inner awareness to a world of external objects he began to feel a kind of pain and panic within himself.

The more one becomes extrovert, the more one begins to feel pain. So within these last two or three decades this great change has taken place. Man has begun to try for self-realization because he has realized that the way in which his ancestors have lived and the way in which his community has been living, has not been a very happy example of peace and serenity.

We see around us people who are unhappy, but they always live in luxury and comfort – wealth and affluence. Because of all of that, we come to the conclusion that something has to be added or something has to be eliminated or some transformation has to take place.

If you have been suffering from a particular physical disease and you have been following a particular diet for the past twenty to thirty years, I would ask you if you should consider changing your diet. When a man has been following a particular pattern of life and that pattern has been causing problems and more problems, then he feels a need to make a departure from that pattern. That is what is happening to our people in our age. It is happening everywhere.

I would say that our age is the age of spiritual evolution, man is at a crossroad. You are there and say go to the right. I am there and say go straight ahead, and he is there and says go back. Another says go to the left. It is for you to decide which way to go. If you go back, well you know exactly what is there, but what is in all other directions is unknown to you.

All saints, sages, scriptures, religions and all thinking individuals have just said one thing. You may live in the world because you have a physical body, but your base should be in the spirit. Nobody has said anything against this. It has been said in different ways.

What is that spiritual space? Withdraw your mind and become more aware of the inner spiritual plane. This revolution, this idea we hope will grow.

Q. Kundalini means the awakening from the lower chakra, yet Sri Aurobindo's integral yoga aims from the

opposite end. Would you say this is a complementary system to the Tantric system?

Swamiji: Definitely the awakening of kundalini takes place in Muladhara chakra. There is no doubt about it. It makes its headway to the higher plane. There is no disagreement on this point anywhere. When the consciousness reaches the higher plane this higher plane then becomes active. As they say symbolically, the Sahasrara chakra petals open themselves.

When the total consciousness of the individual blooms forth, then the same energy comes down. Where does it come down? It is the process of the descending of the energy on the earth plane. How does it come? It comes from the Super Mind.

Suppose you practice Kundalini Yoga and if the kundalini awakens it will affect the higher centers. If then your higher centers are awakened then you will have a different structure, a different quality of mind and consciousness. When you have a different mind and consciousness then you will be operating on this earth plane with a Super-Mind.

This is the concept of Aurobindo when he says the Shakti descends upon earth. That is a poetic way of expression. All the saints, sages and mahatmas after having attained the highest stages of kundalini operated on the earth plane with that Super-Mind. Symbolically you can say that with their Super-Mind they descended upon earth.

So there is no disagreement about these two ideas. Supra-mental energy or consciousness, or the man with the Super-Mind is always operating on earth. He is with us.

Q. Can you find Tantra referred to in the New Testament?

Swamiji: I do not know if everybody will relish the following comments but the practices of Kriya Yoga have been hinted at in the Bible. When we practice Kriya Yoga, there are quite a few kriyas done with eyes open. A few kriyas of Kriya yoga are practiced with eyes closed. In the Bible there is a passage, I may not be able to quote exactly, but you will find out yourself. "There is a path that connects Heaven and earth. From the earth there is a path that leads to Heaven. Half the way you climb the stairs with eyes open, half the way you climb the stairs with eyes closed."

Now it is up to the reader to compare and find a striking similarity between this practice hinted at in the Bible and that which we teach in Kriya Yoga.

What is this ladder, and where is earth and Heaven? Muladhara symbolizes earth and surely according to Tantra it is the earth element. The element of Muladhara tattwa is *prithvi tattwa*, earth element. Sushumna nadi goes up to Ajna chakra. This is the ladder through which the individual consciousness ascends up. Ajna chakra is the symbolic expression of Heaven. The *tattwa*, the element of Ajna chakra is *akasha*, sky, heaven.

So this is the very striking similarity of the instructions hinted at in the Bible and the practices detailed in the Tantra scriptures.

Q. Should Kriya Yoga be learned from a guru or can it be learned from a book?

Swamiji: In recent years we have heard that Kriya Yoga was a traditional training from guru to disciple. I have also read books with descriptions of the practices.

I involved myself in deeper studies, the ancient literature of Vedas and Tantra whilst I was with my guru in Rishikesh. I had access to knowledge in Sanskrit, which was one of the languages I had learned. I began to search through the Tantra and I had a very bad opinion about it. I thought it was magic, occultism or a very black practice. Whilst reading these books I came to valuable pieces which were practices such as Hatha Yoga, pranayama, asanas, mantra and the science of nyasa upon which I developed my system of Yoga Nidra™

One of the disciples of my guru came to me one day and said he was practicing Kriya Yoga. I asked him what that was and when he described it to me I realized that it was in the Tantra I had been reading. He showed me the practice of naumukhi mudra and mahamudra which I recognized from the Tantras. In fact the tradition of Kriya Yoga is a part of Tantra. All these practices of Kriya Yoga are given to us in writing. Even though these practices are given to us in writing they are to be learnt from a guru.

The seventeen kriyas of Kriya Yoga such as the most well known, mahamudra, mahabada mudra, khechari mudra, vajroli mudra, vipareeta karani mudra, tadan kriya, nasikagra drishti and others are included in authentic books on Hatha Yoga. From these sources there are many people who already know all about it. So it is no use saying that Kriya Yoga is only an oral tradition.

Q. Can we practice yamas and niyamas along with Kriya Yoga

Swamiji: It goes without saying that when one is raising a structure one has to take into account all the possible

sciences related to the building of the structure, the material, etc.

When we start practicing yoga and meditation, we try our best to prevent the dissipation of energy. Of course it is not possible for everyone, but as far as possible the practice of yama and niyamas have to be followed within the range of one's own possibility.

But I have my own way of thinking about it. Somehow or other I have not been impressed by yama and niyama. I think we have to do something in our lives so that yama and niyama comes to us. We do not develop them in us, but they develop in us.

The practice of Hatha Yoga, of the six systems of purification of the body, and the practices of yama and niyamas must be understood as one subject, as one topic in life. Many people attempt to practice yama and niyamas and they force themselves into a very rigorous situation.

It is not bad to be truthful and non-violent, but sometimes we are not able to handle the psycho-emotional situation arising in our life through the practice of these dharmas. Therefore, in order to be able to handle the situations arising in our lives by the practice of this dharma, we have to purify the whole group of nadis.

That is why in Hatha Yoga we have the system of purification of Ida and Pingala. Ida and Pingala are the carrier of mental and pranic energy. When we are able to create harmony between the mental and pranic force in our system then these great dharmas, these great observances in the Raja Yoga of Patanjali become very natural.

What I am trying to say is that yama and niyamas should become a natural and spontaneous expression

of our being. The spade work which we have to do in order to create the spontaneity of this dharma is the practices of Hatha yoga.

The 72,000 nadis which carry the computerized impulses throughout the body and the seven systems of principles of purification of this physical body ultimately result in creating a psycho-biological harmony. The psycho-biological harmony ultimately creates the spontaneity of this positive dharma in us.

I become peaceful within and without, not because I am forcing myself to become that, but on account of the great transformation that has taken place in the structure of my psycho-biological system. Then it becomes my nature to be non-violent, full of love and understanding, and full of ahimsa.

In the same way, brahmacharya need not be forcefully practiced by me. When my body is purified and my psychological and emotional structure is adjusted properly by balancing the impulses of Ida and Pingala; and when I am able to retain harmony in the higher centers by certain practices, then brahmacharya becomes a natural and spontaneous expression of my consciousness. I do not practice it, it is my nature. That is how the positive dharma has to be developed in the form of yama and niyamas.

Q. Do you not think that the spiritual awakening that is beginning to take place in the world today is according to a plan under the guidance of a spiritual power in preparation for their return under the leadership of some Messiah?

Swamiji: Do you want my opinion on it? People are becoming more and more aware of the need of spiritual life, but whatever opinion or impressions they have



about the spiritual life they lack guidance, inspiration and the means of transmission. The awakening is there I agree, and from time to time this awakening is being trampled.

In our decade, particularly in the last twenty or thirty years the awakening has been marvelous. It has been voluntary, whilst in other periods of history we have been obliged to follow a path. We were obliged to follow a way which we did not fully understand. Now boys and girls are discovering and trying to discover a way for themselves. This voluntary discovery of spiritual life and voluntary acceptance of spiritual practices is a very happy moment of our times.

When I think about it, if this goes on, if the voluntary efforts to raise one's spiritual consciousness are genuine and honest, then we can definitely reach the sublime heights of consciousness. Therefore, many times I tell my disciples not to get into wild publicity. If you make wild publicity then you are compelling people. They accept a way because they are impressed, but spiritual life is not an outcome of impression that comes to you by a beautiful and nice presentation. Even if spiritual life is not presented to you and there were no books or publicity material, if there is a general awakening of the masses it will always take place.

Withdraw all the books and publicity. Do not propagate through newspapers or television or anything, if the mass consciousness is trying to evolve spiritually it will discover its own way. Therefore, even in our times, though we have been operating very silently with no fuss, still we find that people are in search of us. They are in search of books on yoga and good yoga teachers. People are in search of good systems. This is a very positive sign of awakening.

I am trying to make one point very clear and that everybody has to understand. A spiritual or religious institution or philosophy needs publicity, propaganda and constant brainwashing or whatever you call it. But the awakening of spiritual consciousness in everybody en-mass does not need any publicity.

If you are hungry you will find your own food. If I want spiritual life I will search. Let us therefore try to create a situation where people remain seekers; let them go to ten gurus and ten teachers. Let them try five, ten, twenty philosophies. Let them read one, two, then, hundreds of books. Why are you doing it? Because you are searching. What way are you seeking? You are seeking a way which you have somehow realized in your mind will offer a greater possibility. This type of voluntary awakening we are finding in the last two or three decades.

Q. What if consciousness did not exist?

Swamiji: Maybe we are not having this meeting at all! You are right.

In the Rig-Veda there is one small stanza: The name of the mantra, that is the sutra, is the mantra of non-existence. That is a small stanza in the Vedas of only eight lines, and I think that is the seed of atheism, skepticism, agnosticism. I am not saying that you are one, maybe I am also an atheist, because I do not believe in a personal god, and a man who does not believe in a personal god is branded as an atheist.

The mantra says, "Who has created this? Is there a creator? And if he has created it does he know that he has created it? But is there a creation and if there is a creation and there is a creator, is he existing now?"

Finally, the mantra ends, "I think non-existence is the prime matter upon which reality is based. Non-existence is the basis of existence".

So maybe consciousness does not exist. But still we are existing! As when a neutron bomb is released only the physical body is existing and consciousness is not existing.

Q. When you achieve this higher level of consciousness, does this give you an awareness of consciousness between your earthly lives?

Swamiji: The awakening of mind and consciousness brings mind in touch with time and space. Individual mind is a concept; in fact it does not exist. Universal mind is existing and it is the reality. Universal mind is composed of a type of, we may say, proto-matter. In Tantra this is symbolized by a golden egg.

In the center of the Universal mind is a point known as bindu and at the two ends of this Universal Mind are time and space. Time is the positive and space the negative energy. When you start practicing the type of yoga we are talking about then space and time come close to each other in the area of the center bindu. This bindu is the nucleus and has object, matter in itself. When time and space come close together in meditation there is an explosion in bindu. When it explodes, time and space are at one point. At that time, life in the past and life in the future are one experience.

Even as you are able to see a panorama in one instance, in the same way, when the Universal Mind is charged with the unity of time, space and object in one, the experience is one homogeneity. One does not find a difference.

Q. What is wrong with the image of yoga that in a city of 10,000,000 people there is only such a small gathering here this evening? Why is it so difficult to disseminate the knowledge of yoga? Why does it take so long?

Swamiji: I am afraid I cannot share your ideas. Recently when I was in Denmark, I was told and I know because I have been working in the Scandinavian countries for the past few years, that the Education Department sends circulars to every Danish citizen offering them participation in yoga lessons. The government pays the teachers. The awakening is there but in my class which was in the ashram, there were 120 people. This little crowd is not a discouraging crowd and a crowd can not be encouraging, you see. It is the quality. You are there, I am here, and that is enough.

Many people feel that there ought to be 50,000 people listening to the message of yoga. But it is not politics, yoga is a science of man's depth of personality; it is a subject which is sincere, serious and great. So, therefore, if this audience is all that is listening to me it does not mean that in London people do not know yoga. Yoga is a mighty culture in offering and very soon it is going to direct the experiences of man, his behavior, thought, and process of perception.

Q. There is a movement called Krishna Consciousness not only in the west but all over the world. They would argue that devotional service would be a higher call than what you are advocating. What is your answer to that?

Swamiji: They are right and I also am right. I was only introducing Tantra and I did not go into the whole of it. In Tantra there is the concept of Shiva and Shakti

and also of Guru and Disciple. There is the concept of total submission to a higher divinity, Shakti, where you completely surrender to her. The concept of Bhakti and divinity has been extracted from Tantra. Bhakti is an aspect or limb or Tantra.

If you get time to read some of the important books written on Tantra, you will agree with me that the whole range of Tantra is based upon Bhakti. Kriya Yoga, the practices of yoga are based upon Tantra.

What is Bhakti? It is devotion and devotion to guru can also be devotion. It is devotion to Shakti and not only to Krishna, Christ or Rama. If you have absolute devotion to your guru, that is Bhakti Yoga. If you have total submission, devotion and dedication to Shakti that is also Bhakti. Bhakti is not confined to devotion to a personal God. I could very well think of the divinity in the form of energy and not in the form of a person. So they are right and I am also right.

Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga, Jnana Yoga; all the forms of yoga are off-shoots from the body of Tantra.

Q. There is a practice in both the west and the east to perform vasectomy on a man. If that man's kundalini has not risen, is it possible after vasectomy?

Swamiji: Awakening of kundalini and vasectomy do not come into conflict with each other. In fact in the science of Hatha Yoga siddhasana aims at controlling the sensations in the perineum as also in the lower viscera. So the stimuli from these two centers does not excite the testosterone. So vasectomy and yoga practices do not conflict with each other. I have no opinions about vasectomy because I have not read much about it.

Hari Om Tat Sat

